
Pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools

A good practice report

January 2020

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Introduction

This report is written in response to a request for advice from the Minister for Education in her remit letter to Estyn for 2018-2019. It focuses on effective provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in maintained primary, secondary and all-age schools. The report is intended for the Welsh Government, headteachers and staff in schools, local authorities and regional consortia.

The focus in this report is on the effective practice schools make under the current statutory framework and the arrangements set out in the Code of Practice for Wales (2002). This means that throughout the report, we refer to SEN and the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo), even though the individual schools we visited may use the terms ALN and the additional learning needs co-ordinator (ALNCo). Nevertheless, the practice described in this report applies equally to the provisions of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 and, in many cases, addresses specifically many of its aims and aspirations. For further discussion of questions to do with terminology, please see Appendix 2.

The report draws on evidence from school inspections and from visits to a selection of schools across Wales where inspections have identified particularly strong provision and practice for pupils with SEN. It includes case studies and examples of effective practice throughout. See Appendix 3 for further details of the evidence base.

Background

Special educational needs

The current legal framework surrounding the education of pupils in primary and secondary schools with SEN is based on provisions made in the Education Act 1996. Section 312 of the Act defines a child as having SEN if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them (Great Britain, 1996). Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- b) have a disability which either prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of their age in schools within the area of the local authority; or
- c) are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition at a) or b) or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (Great Britain, 1996).

Special educational provision means:

- a) for children aged two or over, educational provision that is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in maintained schools, other than special schools, in the area;
- b) for children aged under two, educational provision of any kind (Great Britain, 1996).

The SEN Code of Practice for Wales (2002) and the graduated response

The 1996 Act required a code of practice to be produced to provide practical guidance for how local authorities and maintained schools should undertake their functions in respect of SEN. The SEN Code of Practice for Wales (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002) provides detailed guidance based on the following five fundamental principles:

- a pupil with SEN should have their needs met
- the SEN of children will normally be met in mainstream school settings
- the views of the pupil should be sought and taken into account
- parents and carers have a vital role to play in supporting their children's education
- children with SEN should be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education, based on the National Curriculum and the Foundation Phase Framework

The code also outlines the graduated response that schools should provide where pupils are not making satisfactory progress, and where the evidence suggests that 'the pupil requires help over and above that which is normally available within the particular class or subject' (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002, p.50). The Code advocates three stages of intervention, based on the requirement for schools to make full use of available classroom and school resources, before drawing on specialist expertise from outside the school.

The three stages of intervention under the graduated response are:

- Early Years Action/School Action – where schools seek to provide additional support for pupils themselves
- Early Years Action Plus/School Action Plus – where schools work together with the involvement of external agencies
- Statutory assessments and statements – where the local authority assumes legal responsibility for to provide a specified package of support

In schools, pupils with SEN will be recorded on the school's SEN register under one of these stages. More information on the different stages of the graduated response can be found in Appendix 4.

Post-16 learners

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 (Great Britain, 2000) sets out the provision for learners aged over 16 who are not in school. The Act uses the term 'learning difficulties and/or disabilities' (LDD) rather than SEN. The definition of LDD is essentially the same as for SEN, namely whether a learner has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of their age group, or whether they have a disability that prevents or hinders them from using the education and training on offer.

Additional learning needs reform

In December 2016, the Welsh Government introduced the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill, following a series of reviews, committee inquiries, policy proposals, consultations, a White Paper and a draft Bill that sought to address a growing sense that reform of the current legal framework was overdue. The Bill was passed by the National Assembly for Wales in December 2017. It received Royal Assent in January 2018 and became the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 ('the Act').

The Act makes provision for a new statutory framework for supporting children and young people with additional learning needs (ALN). It replaces the current legislation around SEN and the arrangements for children and young people with LDD in post-16 education and training. Under the Act, the term SEN will be replaced with the term ALN. The term 'special educational provision' will be replaced with 'additional learning provision' (National Assembly for Wales, 2018).

It is expected that the changes to ALN legislation will be implemented over a three-year period, which is expected to run from September 2021 to August 2024. The implementation period will run alongside delivery of the wider ALN transformation programme. During the implementation period existing SEN legislation continues to apply and will continue to do so until the implementation period is concluded.

Further information on the key changes introduced by the Act can be found in Appendix 5.

Main findings

Effective support for pupils with SEN

- 1 In most of the schools we visited, staff use a wide range of approaches to ensure that they identify pupils' needs at an early stage. A key element of this process is the close collaborative working between schools and settings that enables them to share information about pupils with SEN as they move from one phase of their education to the next. These arrangements help to ensure that all staff have a thorough understanding of pupils' needs, interests and abilities before they join the school.
- 2 Where pupils receive support from external agencies, such as health and social services, staff consider this information carefully to ensure they have a comprehensive understanding of the child's needs. They take good account of the information in reports provided by specialists, such as education psychologists, speech and language therapists and occupational therapists, when planning provision for these pupils.
- 3 In most of the schools, staff use this information carefully to plan interventions that are matched carefully to individual pupils' needs. Many schools use a wide range of interventions that reflect the complex needs of their pupils. Staff in these schools work with specialist staff from the local authority or health board to plan and administer the delivery of these interventions according to each child's requirements.
- 4 In many schools, staff set useful and appropriate targets for pupils in their individual education plans (IEPs). Staff consider the full range of available information about pupils' attainment to set challenging targets that relate well to pupils' needs and aspirations at different stages in their learning. They consult carefully with pupils, parents and carers to formulate targets that are as useful to the pupil as possible and discuss strategies to help families address these targets at home.
- 5 In schools where the provision for pupils with SEN is strong, there are robust arrangements to monitor and track the progress of all pupils in the school. In many schools, the monitoring of progress for pupils with SEN is based on a shared understanding of pupils' wellbeing and what is important to each child. In these schools, staff consider carefully the tracking of pupils' progress in learning in areas such as behaviour, attendance, and engagement in lessons and the progress pupils make towards the targets on their IEPs. This information, together with information about the progress pupils make towards their therapeutic goals, provides staff with a more complete view of the progress pupils make.

Engaging with others to support pupils with SEN

- 6 In nearly all schools visited, there are well-developed processes to engage with parents, carers and families. These include an extensive range of opportunities for staff to build productive relationships with parents and carers, gain their trust and enable them to inform the provision for their children.

- 7 Nearly all schools develop strong partnerships with other schools and education providers, locally and regionally. These partnerships ensure that transition arrangements for pupils with SEN are robust and enable schools to share good practice with staff in other schools and to learn from them.
- 8 In nearly all schools with specialist classes or resource bases, communication between the staff in the two settings is strong and supports pupils' movement within the school. In these schools, staff in the resource base work with staff in the rest of the school to share their specialised knowledge and promote strategies to support them around the school.
- 9 In nearly all schools, multi-agency working is an essential part of the school's day-to-day support for pupils with SEN. These schools work with a broad range of partners, including an extensive range of external agencies. They respond thoughtfully to the advice from these professionals to inform the planning of provision for pupils and the setting of targets on pupils' IEPs.
- 10 A key element of accessing the support of specialist services successfully is the skill of staff at the school in completing referral documentation promptly. Where schools are most successful in ensuring this support is in place, they advocate strongly for their pupils and families and provide robust challenge when the support provided does not meet pupils' needs

Effective leadership for SEN

- 11 In nearly all schools visited, senior leaders establish a highly inclusive vision and ethos that sets high aspirations for all pupils, whatever their abilities and needs. This vision is based on providing equality of opportunity for all pupils and permeates throughout the school. Leaders and governors communicate this vision strongly and ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities for pupils with SEN. As a result, these leaders promote the development of caring and supportive environments, where all pupils are encouraged to grow as individuals and achieve well in relation to their starting points.
- 12 In most schools, leaders provide well-planned specialist training for staff to support pupils with SEN. In these schools, the SENCo works closely with other senior leaders to develop the skills of staff, based on a thorough understanding of the needs of individual pupils. Professional learning opportunities link well to performance management processes and enable all staff to develop their understanding of SEN overall, as well as the specific expertise to support individual pupils.
- 13 In nearly all schools, leaders monitor and evaluate carefully the progress of pupils with SEN and adapt their provision accordingly. In these schools, effective self-evaluation starts with an understanding of each pupil's needs and a willingness to adjust the provision where necessary to ensure they make progress in line with their abilities. This approach informs staff training. In the most effective schools, leaders review the needs of pupils and the skill set of support and teaching staff regularly.

Recommendations

Schools should:

- R1 Improve the quality of targets in pupils' IEPs to promote pupils' progress in learning and independence
- R2 Ensure self-evaluation arrangements give more attention to the progress pupils with SEN make in relation to their needs, abilities and individual starting points

Local authorities should:

- R3 Support schools to access the external specialist services they need to promote the wellbeing and progress of pupils with SEN
- R4 Promote partnership working between special schools and other maintained schools in the local authority

The Welsh Government should:

- R5 Assist schools and local authorities during the implementation of new statutory arrangements to support pupils with ALN

Effective support for pupils with SEN

How schools identify pupils' needs and plan interventions

- 14 In most of the schools we visited, staff use a wide range of approaches to ensure that they identify pupils' needs at an early stage. A key element of this is the close collaborative working between schools and settings that enables them to share information about pupils with SEN as they move from one phase of their education to the next, for example, from a non-maintained setting or nursery to primary school, or from primary to secondary school. These robust arrangements help to ensure that all staff have a thorough understanding of pupils' needs, interests and abilities before they join the school.
- 15 Where pupils receive support from external agencies such as health and social services, staff consider this information carefully to ensure they have a comprehensive understanding of the child's needs. In many primary schools, for example, staff liaise effectively with representatives from the local authority to ensure they are able to meet a child's SEN before they join the school, and to provide early support for parents, carers and families. They take good account of the information in reports provided by specialists such as education psychologists, speech and language therapists and occupational therapists, when planning provision for these pupils.
- 16 Where primary schools have a nursery, non-maintained setting or Flying Start provision on-site, staff from the school make highly effective use of information from these settings and from family engagement programmes to acquire helpful knowledge of the child before they join the school. In addition, they invite families, parents and carers of prospective pupils into school to help them get to know the school, or they make home visits to the family to gather additional information.
- 17 As pupils progress through primary school, staff in most of the schools in the survey use a wide range of assessments to identify pupils' starting points in areas such as literacy, communication and numeracy, as well as issues to do with pupils' wellbeing. These assessments provide staff with a rich source of information about pupils' abilities and needs across a wide range of areas, including aspects such as the development of pupils' social skills. Where pupils have more complex needs or specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia and dyscalculia, schools rely on input from specialist agencies within the local authority to assess their needs and plan suitable interventions.
- 18 In most schools, staff use this assessment information carefully to plan interventions that are matched carefully to pupils' needs. For example, where pupils are working at below expected levels in literacy and numeracy, most schools have suitable arrangements to boost their skills development through intervention programmes in specific areas such as reading, spelling or numerical reasoning. In many cases, pupils work in small groups led by support staff or with one-to-one support outside the classroom to improve specific skills. In a minority of cases, pupils are supported by staff alongside their peers in mainstream classes.

- 19 Many schools deploy an extensive range of interventions that reflect the more complex needs of their pupils. This is particularly the case where schools have a local authority specialist class attached, have high proportions of pupils with statements of SEN, or where staff with responsibility for pupils with SEN have highly developed expertise. These interventions include language development programmes, nurture-based interventions, or therapeutic programmes, such as speech and language, physiotherapy, or occupational therapy. Staff in these schools work very effectively with specialist staff from the local authority or health board to plan and administer the delivery of these interventions according to each child's requirements.
- 20 In these schools, staff administering interventions are well trained and the responsibilities of teachers, support staff and the SENCo are clear. Where school staff have responsibility for administering therapeutic or medical programmes, they benefit from specific training and close collaboration with health professionals. There are effective lines of communication between those who plan, deliver and monitor the interventions, including specialist and therapeutic staff, and classroom teachers. This helps to ensure that in many schools, staff monitor the success of these interventions rigorously.
- 21 Bryntirion Comprehensive School provides high quality support for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Robust assessments when pupils join the school enable staff to identify suitable interventions that support pupils' progress very successfully.

Case study 1: Bryntirion Comprehensive School

Information about the school

Bryntirion Comprehensive School is an English-medium 11-18 mixed comprehensive school maintained by Bridgend local authority. In January 2019 there were 1,204 pupils on roll, including 203 in the sixth form. Twelve point two per cent (12.2%) of pupils are eligible for free school meals which is below the national average of 16.4%. Approximately 20% of pupils have SEN with just over 1% of pupils having a statement of SEN. There is a communication resource base for pupils with ASD attached to the school.

Action

A particular strength of the school's provision for pupils with SEN is their approach to working with pupils with a diagnosis of ASD. The school provides exceptional support for pupils on the autistic spectrum and for those awaiting a diagnosis. This means that parents and carers of children on the autistic spectrum from outside the catchment area often choose to send their children to the school. These pupils are fully integrated into mainstream classes and attend the communication base for intervention support or to engage in social activities at lunchtime. All teachers, support staff, governors and ancillary staff have completed autism awareness training. Similarly, all pupils across the school engage with personal and social education lessons that focus on autism awareness, and how they can support pupils on the autistic spectrum.

The school has comprehensive and robust systems that enable staff to identify pupils' needs on entry to the school very effectively. This includes the routine screening of speech, language and communication development of all pupils in Year 7. The school groups pupils according to need following screening, and puts in place a range of valuable interventions to meet individual need, including group and one-to-one programmes. The early identification of language and communication needs enables the school to provide highly targeted personalised support.

An important part of this support is to help pupils transfer their language skills in the classroom. The SENCo provides teachers with useful resources to help pupils with SEN develop their language and communication skills across the curriculum. This includes helpful checklists and advice for teaching staff on how to support pupils if they experience difficulty in expressing themselves clearly. Staff across the school track rigorously the progress of pupils who receive support for language and communication, and many of these pupils make very effective progress.

The school plans a range of interventions to ensure that pupils with SEN, and particularly those with ASD, have access to a suitable range of learning and personal support. This helps them flourish in mainstream classes. For example, social skills support groups help pupils with ASD to develop their social communication. Often pupils join this group because of behavioural difficulties linked to poor social skills. On entry to the group, pupils complete an assessment to ensure that the facilitator understands each pupil's starting point. This also provides an opportunity for pupils to reflect on their social skills. Where pupils find it difficult to attend group activities, the school helps them to explore the triggers for their anxiety and makes reasonable adjustments to enable them to participate confidently in the school day. For example, the school has arranged for alternative changing facilities to be made available for pupils during physical education lessons.

Outcomes

Nearly all pupils with SEN, including those with ASD, benefit considerably from the highly effective and personalised support they receive. At key stage 4, pupils with SEN achieve very well and make exceptional progress from their starting points. A few ASD pupils have made successful transitions to higher education and nearly all pupils with SEN progress to appropriate post-16 education, training or employment.

Pupils are proud to speak about their individual differences and share how they have received exceptional support from the school.

- 22 At Brynnau Primary School, rigorous initial assessment processes mean that staff have a strong understanding of pupils' starting points and this supports them very effectively to track and monitor the progress of pupils with SEN.

Case study 2: Brynnau Primary School

Information about the school

Brynnau Primary School is in Brynna, near Pontyclun in Rhondda Cynon Taf local authority. In January 2019 there were 239 pupils on roll, aged from 3 to 11, including 38 nursery children who attend part-time. Fifteen point six per cent (15.6%) of pupils are eligible for free school meals and approximately 10% of pupils have SEN. A very few pupils have a statement of SEN.

Action

On entry to school, staff identify pupils' strengths and needs through rigorous baseline assessments and diagnostic testing. For example, staff use a comprehensive diagnostic tool to assess all pupils' communication skills. The outcomes of this test, together with information from the pre-school provision, ensure that teachers very quickly identify pupils that need in-class, small group or one-to-one extra support.

As pupils progress through the school, teachers and support staff assess pupils' progress regularly against their starting points in key aspects of literacy, numeracy and wellbeing. Information from these tests, as well as the results of teacher assessments and observations, means that staff have a very good understanding of the specific needs of their pupils. School leaders, teachers and support staff hold regular pupil progress meetings to discuss the performance and progress of every pupil. As a result, the school identifies promptly any pupil failing to make expected progress and puts suitable interventions in place.

As far as possible, intervention programmes take place in the classroom as part of the pupils' usual learning activities. However, the school has also set up an attractive and comfortable 'Cwtch' area, where support staff provide targeted support to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and wellbeing in a quiet setting. Well-trained and experienced staff deliver these programmes skilfully and with sensitivity. They make detailed records of pupils' progress and share this information effectively with class teachers so that they can develop these skills in the classroom. A clear understanding of expected outcomes and success criteria enables staff to integrate pupils back into class as soon as possible.

School leaders track pupils' attainment within these programmes and across the curriculum carefully. A whole-school provision map details the support available, information about the pupils that have accessed support and the progress they have made as a result. This enables leaders to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of support very effectively.

Outcomes

Most pupils with SEN make better than expected progress as a result of the support they receive.

Pupils speak positively about the support they receive. Older pupils are very clear about how the school has supported their needs and helped them to make progress in their learning.

Effective target-setting

- 23 The format and content of pupils' IEPs vary widely across the schools we visited, particularly in relation to the number of targets and range of skill areas they address. These variations are generally appropriate, as they relate closely to the needs of individuals or groups of pupils. In most of the schools we visited, IEPs include targets for literacy and numeracy, as well as for important areas such as social skills, independent living skills, readiness for learning, or pupils' wellbeing. In many schools, staff adapt the format of these plans creatively to set high quality targets for pupils that promote individual pupils' future development very successfully.
- 24 In the most effective schools, staff consider carefully the full range of available information about pupils' attainment to set challenging targets that relate well to pupils' needs and aspirations at different stages in their learning. For example, targets in key stage 4 often focus suitably on helping pupils to make a successful transition to the next stage in their learning. In schools where target-setting is most effective, targets support the development of pupils' independence across a broad range of skills, and relate well to their interests and the objectives on their statements of SEN.

At **Ysgol Bae Baglan**, staff use IEPs well to achieve the school's vision of equipping pupils with SEN with the life skills to become resilient and independent. Targets on pupils' IEPs address outcomes under the four headings: health and wellbeing; home and independence; education skills and learning; and social life: my friends, family and life in the community. They include a strong focus on aspects such as developing pupils' independent living skills, travel and social skills, as well as supporting parents and carers to understand how to help their children consolidate these skills at home. Staff ensure that pupils have the opportunity to practise these skills within the school timetable, for example through food-tasting sessions to extend pupils' tolerance of different foods, or through the school's weekly after-school enrichment hour. This session provides pupils with a wide variety of activities that enable them to develop skills outside the classroom, for example, secondary-aged pupils attend a local restaurant to practise ordering food and handling money. As a result of this strong focus on developing independence, pupils have a strong understanding of their own needs and requirements and are more able to advocate for themselves in planning their future life choices.

- 25 In many of the schools we visited, targets are set by staff who know pupils well and who are suitably experienced in target-setting. Generally, where the SENCo is not directly involved in target-setting for each pupil, he/she oversees the process and is responsible for monitoring their quality. In these schools, staff make good use of information supplied by external agencies and professionals, such as educational psychologists, speech and language therapists and occupational therapists, to support pupils to develop the skills they need to access the curriculum. This well co-ordinated approach helps schools to ensure targets address what is most important to each pupil.
- 26 Many schools engage well with parents and carers when setting and reviewing pupils' individual targets, for example, at open mornings and annual review meetings. They consult carefully with parents and carers to formulate targets that are most useful to the pupil and discuss strategies to help them address these targets at home. Where parents and carers are unable to attend target-setting meetings, schools offer them the opportunity to contribute by sending the IEP home to request responses.
- 27 These schools use person-centred practices¹ to involve pupils well in setting and reviewing the targets in their plans. These approaches help pupils to develop a good understanding of their targets. For example, at Brynnau Primary School, teachers write targets in language that is easily accessible to the pupil. Pupils record their targets in their books, and record when they have achieved the target. At Ysgol Gymuned Rhosybol, pupils record their progress against their targets in target books, which are introduced in the nursery and pupils use until they leave in Year 6. At Bishop Hedley Catholic High School, pupils carry their targets with them to each lesson on a 'pupil passport'. This ensures that pupils and staff working with them have ready access to them throughout the day.
- 28 These practices help pupils to develop a sound understanding of the progress they make over time against areas of development that are important to them. As a result, in many of the schools visited, pupils speak extremely positively about the progress they have made because of the support they have received from the school. In addition, they confirmed how the school's work with parents and carers has helped their families to gain a better understanding of their needs and to support their learning more effectively at home.

¹ For a definition of this and other terms used throughout the report, please refer to the glossary

At **Ysgol Gynradd Parcyrhun**, the SENCO, working together with teachers and support staff, sets specific and measurable targets for pupils based on relevant information from a range of stakeholders. Regular engagement with pupils, families and external agencies ensures that targets address pupils' most important and relevant needs. One-page profiles and IEPs ensure that everyone who is involved with these pupils is completely aware of their targets, previous achievement and needs when planning learning experiences and purposeful intervention. The teacher in charge of the resource base for hearing-impaired pupils also meets with mainstream teachers individually every week in order to prepare for pupils who participate in mainstream lessons. This ensures that teachers and assistants are very aware of pupils' targets and include them well in planning lessons.

The school has effective arrangements to monitor and review pupils' targets regularly. Staff meetings focus successfully on evaluating pupils' progress, in addition to monitoring the suitability of intervention for individuals. As a result, they are able to adapt provision in line with pupils' personal needs as these develop over time.

- 29 In a few of the schools we visited, the quality of targets on pupils' IEPs is too variable. In these schools, target-setting does not address pupils' individual needs well enough and misses opportunities to provide a reliable record of pupils' progress over time. Generally, this is because targets are either too broad or focus on very specific aspects of literacy and numeracy. In both cases, it becomes difficult for teachers to support pupils to apply and develop these skills across the curriculum or in contexts that support the development of their independence.

Monitoring and reviewing pupil progress

- 30 In schools where the provision for pupils with SEN is strong, there are successful arrangements to monitor and track the progress of all pupils in the school. These schools gather and analyse comprehensive progress data on all pupils. This helps teachers and leaders to plan more effectively to support pupils with SEN to make progress as they move through the school.
- 31 Systems to track the progress of most pupils with SEN in mainstream schools are based securely on national frameworks, such as foundation phase, national curriculum or examination outcomes. In addition, where pupils participate in interventions to improve aspects of literacy and numeracy, this provides schools with valuable data about pupils' progress in targeted skill areas, such as reading, spelling or numerical reasoning. This focus helps to identify pupils who are making slower than expected progress for their age group, and supports staff to identify where pupils may be experiencing difficulties in learning that are greater than their peers.
- 32 In many of the schools we visited, the monitoring of progress for pupils with SEN extends beyond these frameworks and the tracking of specific interventions, to encompass a holistic approach based on a shared understanding of the pupil's

wellbeing and what is important to the child. In these schools, staff consider carefully the tracking of pupils' progress in learning in areas such as behaviour, attendance, and engagement in lessons. Many schools have robust arrangements to review the progress of pupils towards the targets on their IEPs. The information they gather, together with evidence about the progress pupils make towards their therapeutic goals, provides staff with a more complete view of the progress pupils make. This helps to inform pupils' annual reviews of progress and enables staff to provide appropriate support for pupils to access learning at each stage so that they make progress towards the next stage of their education, employment or training.

At **Ysgol Gynradd Bontnewydd**, the headteacher, who is also the SENCo, has developed robust systems to monitor pupils' progress and evaluate the impact of interventions very effectively. All staff know and understand the needs of individual pupils well. They use assessment data, individual knowledge of the pupils, and reports from specialists, such as educational psychologists, speech and language therapists and occupational therapists, to create one-page profiles that set out clearly the needs of each pupil.

The headteacher has defined clearly how to support pupils with low standardised scores for literacy and numeracy or who experience difficulty following whole-class interventions. The steps staff should take identify three distinct phases of support. This helpful structure provides useful guidance for teaching staff as to when they need to reduce or intensify the level of intervention, including when the school should arrange an assessment from the educational psychologist.

This approach ensures that the school monitors pupil progress very carefully and reviews the effectiveness of interventions regularly. Where pupils make strong progress, an intervention is withdrawn. If pupils do not make progress within a set timescale, they move on to the next stage of intervention. As a result, pupils do not continue to receive interventions that are not effective. Clear timescales for involving outside agencies, mean that the school always tries out a range of appropriate strategies before seeking external help. As a result of these robust processes, support for pupils with SEN is highly effective and pupils with SEN make excellent progress.

- 33 Staff at Bishop Hedley Catholic High School have developed consistent and effective practices to monitor and review the progress of pupils with SEN. This closely co-ordinated collaborative working supports pupils to make strong progress.

Case study 3: Bishop Hedley Catholic High School

Information about the school

Bishop Hedley Catholic High School is an 11-16 comprehensive school in Merthyr Tydfil. In January 2019 there were 507 pupils on roll. Twenty point two per cent (20.2%) of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average of 16.4%. Approximately 27% of pupils have SEN and a very few pupils have a statement of SEN.

Action

The school has strong processes to support the progress of individual pupils as they move through the school. For example, when pupils first join the school, staff use a wide range of assessments to complement the information gathered from primary schools to provide a secure picture of pupils' individual starting points. The head of inclusion uses this information effectively to identify and implement appropriate interventions.

The school's inclusion team liaises closely with classroom teachers to provide effective and well-co-ordinated support for pupils with SEN. Learning coaches work closely with individuals and small groups of pupils to administer interventions for literacy and dyscalculia, review progress regularly and maintain up-to-date records for individual pupils. As pupils move through the school, regular work scrutiny helps to identify skills deficits or gaps in knowledge that may not have been identified through the initial assessment process. These exercises enhance well-established informal arrangements for teachers to make referrals at any time to the inclusion team where their performance is causing concern.

Staff across the school track the progress of all pupils against their targets each half-term. The information from these assessments provides a comprehensive overview of individual pupils' progress in their learning, as well as in aspects of their personal development. The head of inclusion reviews this information at regular 'raising standards' meetings or at meetings of the fortnightly 'wellbeing and attendance monitoring (WaAM)' group to identify where extra support may be required.

The school monitors pupils' performance against the targets on their IEPs every term. These targets link closely to key areas for development in literacy, numeracy and wider aspects of pupils' personal development. Learning coaches update these targets regularly based on their ongoing work with pupils, and contributions from the pupils, parents and carers. This well-co-ordinated approach, based on a strong understanding of the principles of person-centred practice, helps to ensure targets are relevant and identify accurately what is most important to the pupil at each stage in their learning. For example, at key stage 3, targets focus closely on consolidating core skills or addressing gaps in pupils' knowledge. At key stage 4, targets are tailored closely to support pupils to make a successful transition to the next stage of their life and learning.

The school retains an additional focus on the progress of these pupils towards positive destinations through close monitoring of the school's register of pupils who are at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) when they leave the school. This enables the school to access valuable input from external agencies to provide pupils with enhanced careers guidance according to their personal need.

Outcomes

Nearly all pupils with SEN make strong progress. For the last 3 years, 100% of pupils attain the Level1 threshold. Most students with SEN make effective progress based on their target levels/grades. Nearly all of the students identified to need support as a result of weak standardised scores in literacy and numeracy make rapid progress.

Pupils at the school speak articulately and openly about the difficulties they face in their learning and how the school has helped them to overcome these.

Engaging with others to support pupils with SEN

Engaging with parents, carers and families

- 34 In nearly all schools visited, there are well-developed processes to engage with parents, carers and families. These include an extensive range of opportunities for staff to build productive relationships with parents and carers, gain their trust and enable them to inform the provision for their children. In particular, many primary schools engage actively with prospective parents and carers before the pupils have joined the school. For example, they gather information from Flying Start and non-maintained nursery settings and make home visits to get to know the needs of the child. The information they gather helps to ensure that pupils and families receive good support to settle into their new school.
- 35 In most of the schools we visited, there are regular opportunities throughout the school year for parents and carers to attend school to meet with staff, for example at parents evenings and open mornings. Parents and carers receive useful information about their children's progress through written reports and phone calls home. They have meaningful opportunities to contribute to target-setting and support plans at progress reviews and annual review meetings, or to request face-to-face meetings to discuss the progress of their child. Staff use these meetings productively to discuss strategies with parents and carers on how to support their children's needs at home.
- 36 These schools provide valuable opportunities to engage informally with parents and carers. For example, many schools hold regular coffee mornings for parents, carers and families to get to know the staff and see the work their child is doing at the school. A few schools use their school website and social media platforms particularly well to highlight and celebrate the work of pupils with SEN. Many primary schools in particular engage actively with parents and carers at the school gate to facilitate communication at the start and end of each day. These interactions help the school and parents and carers to exchange important information about the day-to-day progress and welfare of the child.
- 37 Gaer Primary School works exceptionally well with parents, carers, families to support pupils with SEN when they join the school.

Case study 4: Gaer Primary School

Information about the school

Gaer Primary School is on the west side of the city of Newport. It opened in 2014, following the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools. In January 2019 the school had 486 pupils between the ages of 3 and 11, including 63 part-time pupils in the nursery. There are 17 classes, including a local authority resource base in key stage 2 for pupils with a range of speech, behavioural and general learning difficulties.

The average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals over the last three years is 17.9%. This is slightly below the national average of 18.4%. Twenty-two per cent (22%) of pupils have SEN, and a very few pupils have a statement of SEN.

Action

Staff begin the process of establishing relationships with parents and carers before a pupil with SEN enters the school. Teachers and support staff undertake home visits that help to establish trusting and supportive relationships with families from an early stage. The home visits enable the school to have a clear understanding of the needs of each pupil and address concerns the family may have about the transition into primary school. As a result of this early engagement with children and families, the school is able to tailor its provision and support to meet the wider needs of the child. This might include additional support for language development or encouragement for parents and carers to join the school's extensive family learning programme. These opportunities play an important role in ensuring that parents of SEN pupils feel part of the school community.

The school works particularly closely with families who have children in the resource base. Pupils enter this facility at different points in the academic year. Many make this transition at the start of key stage 2 from different schools across the city. This is often a challenging time for pupils and families. School leaders and staff work sensitively with parents and carers at this potentially difficult time to ensure that they have a good insight into the ethos of the school and the way in which their child can become a valued member of the school community.

The school offers new parents a range of opportunities to visit the school. This might include formal visits to tour the school and meet senior staff and the class teacher, or time to engage in enjoyable activities alongside their child. The school does not have one approach to transition into the resource base but responds flexibly to the needs of each family to ensure that they feel confident to engage in the next stage of their child's learning.

Once a pupil has begun to attend the resource base, staff telephone parents and carers daily to keep them in touch with their child's experiences and engagement of in the early stages of their time at the school. This flexible and individualised transition process is an example of how effectively the school places the wellbeing of all pupils with SEN and their families at the centre of their work.

Outcomes

Pupils feel happy, included and valued. They show exceptionally high levels of wellbeing and positive attitudes to learning. Nearly all pupils with SEN make very good progress in line with their abilities and needs.

The family engagement programme has had a positive impact on helping

parents and carers of pupils with SEN feel involved in their children's education as well as developing their skills and confidence to support their children with learning.

Pupils with SEN value the ways in which the school involves their families in their learning and experience at school. This is particularly the case for key stage 2 pupils who join the school to attend the resource base. They value the way in which the school helps them develop their confidence and self-esteem.

- 38 An outstanding feature in many of the schools we visited is the work with parents and carers to help them develop the skills they need to support their child's learning in skills such as numeracy, reading or ICT. In these schools, staff provide parents with useful resources to help them support their children at home, for example guidance on developing motor skills and phonics, as well as information about useful books and apps. They invite parents and carers to come into the school to try out activities with their children or to observe their children in class. This helps parents and carers understand ways in which they can help their children learn at home. Similarly, where parents and carers have poor literacy skills, many schools meet with them on a one-to-one basis to explain reports together and discuss how they can help them in their learning at home.
- 39 In these schools, this beneficial engagement with families includes providing regular training events for parents and carers on how best to support their child's particular area of difficulty.

Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenffrwd organises regular training events for parents and carers, including sessions on autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), delivered by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). This gives them a much better understanding of their children's difficulties, and the strategies they can use to support them. Sessions on dyslexia help parents to understand how their children can use mind maps to organize their ideas and structure their work. The school also facilitates sessions delivered by staff from Betsi Cadwalader and Alder Hey hospitals for parents of pupils who have medical needs. Many of the parents who attend these sessions would be reluctant to engage in the training if it were held outside school. The close relationship and trust between school staff and parents means that parents have the confidence to attend and participate.

- 40 Where there are strong relationships with parents and families, pupils benefit from a shared understanding of what is important for the child. This approach helps reduce differences of opinion between home and school and helps them to make more effective progress. At Ysgol Gymuned Rhosybol, the detailed knowledge of pupils' family circumstances helps to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to address issues that are important to support their wellbeing and engagement in learning.

Case study 5: Ysgol Gymuned Rhosybol

Information about the school

Ysgol Gymuned Rhosybol is situated in the village of Rhosybol, approximately two miles from Amlwch in Anglesey, and it serves the village and the surrounding rural area. In January 2019 there were 68 pupils between 3 and 11 years old on roll.

The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is 10.4%, which is below the national average of 18.4%. Around 16% of pupils have SEN and a very few pupils have a statement of SEN.

Action

Ysgol Gymuned Rhosybol reviewed its approach to setting homework, following a growing realisation among staff of the negative impact traditional expectations of homework were having on family life, particularly for families of children with higher levels of need. Pupils, particularly those with SEN, were displaying increasingly low levels of engagement in lessons because of their anxieties about homework. Parents had become resentful of the pressure placed on them to support their children's homework. In particular, parents who had separated from each other expressed concerns that they had limited time with their children and did not wish to spend that time completing homework.

Following consultation with staff and pupils, the school decided to focus on 'family involvement' to replace traditional homework tasks. The headteacher wrote to all families explaining that school's approach to homework was changing. The letter explained that families would be encouraged to participate in various social and relaxation activities together, either during the evening or on the weekend. This sent out a really important message to pupils, parents and staff about the importance of rest. This also meant that if a child stayed with a different family member over a weekend, then the activities would contribute towards the homework, thus eliminating the need for parents to choose between spending time on homework tasks or engaging together socially. The pupils created an extensive list of activities to enjoy as a family. These included:

- collecting blackberries
- climbing a tree
- camping indoors or outdoors
- making a mud pie
- writing a recipe and preparing a dish
- learning about another country
- building a den
- learning about the local area
- visiting a new town or a village
- walking in the woods or along the beach

Each pupil has a 'Treasure Book', which they use to record and reflect on the activity they undertake. This is a very successful element of the initiative and families work hard to record and preserve their experiences in this book in any way they wish. For example, pupils and their family members may include photos they have taken or designs for a birthday card, a recipe, picture or a map they have drawn. Pupils choose to paint their experiences or present written accounts as diary entries, poems or newspaper articles. Pupils who choose to collect items often include them as part of their documented activity.

Whether the children are building a den in their garden or living room, making mud pies or pancakes, designing a game or learning to tie their shoe laces, the interaction between themselves and family members lets them see how much the people that care for them are investing in their education. Documenting these activities in any form they choose, so that their friends can see what they've done, is a meaningful way of developing the skills, confidence and the motivation for independent study at a later stage in life. The Treasure Books are brought into school every fortnight, not to be marked, but to be shared, enjoyed and celebrated with friends and the staff. The whole school community takes pride in the Treasure Books which they plan and create with a great deal of thought.

Outcomes

Since introducing the Treasure Book activities in September 2019, staff report that most pupils with high levels of emotional, behavioural and social difficulties are considerably more engaged and interested in their work. These pupils are far more confident about their learning and demonstrate a positive attitude and mindset towards their work. Many vulnerable pupils in key stage 2 present written work that exceeds their agreed targets.

Collaboration between schools to support transition

- 41 Nearly all of the schools we visited develop strong partnerships with other schools and education providers, locally and regionally. These partnerships ensure that transition arrangements for pupils with SEN from nursery settings to primary school, primary to secondary school and secondary to post-16 providers are robust. This highly effective collaboration helps to secure pupils' continued progress when they join their new school or provider.
- 42 Most secondary schools work closely with their partner primary schools to provide enhanced transition arrangements for pupils who require extra support in making the move to a new school. In many cases, these include an extended programme of transition activities for pupils with SEN. For example, staff at Ysgol Gyfun Glantaf attend the annual review of pupils who will be attending its resource base for pupils with profound learning needs from Year 4 onwards. This helps to forge good relationships with pupils and parents at an early stage, and to ensure that the school has a thorough knowledge of the needs of its prospective pupils before they join the school.

At **Fitzalan High School**, transition arrangements are a particularly successful feature of its work to support pupils with SEN. Close working relationships with its partner primary schools enable the SENCo to establish a clear picture of pupils' needs and abilities before they join the school. The high school uses this information well to provide flexible and responsive transition activities that helps pupils settle smoothly into life in the secondary school. A few pupils take part in an enhanced transition process coordinated by the key stage 2 cluster lead for wellbeing. This programme, based at Fitzalan High School, enables particularly vulnerable pupils in Year 6 to engage with specialist facilities and practical lessons, and generally become familiar with the secondary school before they enter Year 7.

- 43 Ysgol Gyfun Glantaf has developed well-co-ordinated arrangements across all its partner primary schools to facilitate the transition of pupils with SEN.

Case study 6: Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf

Information about the school

Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf is a designated Welsh-medium school for pupils between 11 and 18 years old. In January 2019 there were 1,209 pupils on roll. 9.2% of pupils are eligible for FSM which is below the national average of 16.4%. 19% of pupils have SEN, and a little under 2% of pupils have a statement of SEN. The school hosts a local authority resource centre for pupils with profound learning needs.

Action

The school has robust transition arrangements with all of its partner primary schools. This includes regular visits to the secondary school and effective sharing of information. An important feature of this is the development of a pupil profile for every pupil with SEN who will be based in a mainstream class. Staff in the primary schools produce detailed pupil profiles, using a template produced by Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf. In order to obtain helpful information from pupils, schools use the following questions:

Things that are important to me

- What makes you happy?
- What do you like doing?
- How do you spend your time outside school?
- What things make your life good?
- Which people/animals are important to you?
- What things do you need to avoid?
- What things are you proud of?

Things to like and admire about me

(The best thing about being me)

- How would your friends describe you if I were to ask them?

The best way to support me

- What equipment do you need?
- What do teachers do that helps you?
- What is the best way for you to learn?
- What do teachers need to avoid doing?
- What helps you to learn?
- What makes a good lesson?
- What makes you feel comfortable?
- What is it important for teachers to know about you?

The completed profiles provide extremely useful information on the needs of the pupils and specific strategies that can be used to support them. Mainstream staff as well as specialist teachers and support staff find these very helpful and refer to them regularly.

Example of a completed profile:

Things that are important to me

- Family
- Friends
- Football, in particular Cardiff City
- Karate – I have a yellow belt
- Dog
- I like being outdoors. I play football with my brother and I also like swimming

Things to like and admire about me

(The best thing about being me)

- I am happy to make new friends
- Thoughtful
- Creative
- A good friend

The best way to support me

- I need to wear glasses to read from the whiteboard
- Extra time to complete tasks
- You will need to repeat instructions and information for me as I tend to forget things
- Explaining and modelling tasks helps me understand what to do
- I find reading very difficult, so using a reader helps me to complete more work
- Using mind maps helps me plan my work
- Give me time to process information about a task
- If you encourage me to carry on with my work, this helps me achieve more
- I need help to start a task
- Scaffolding, key vocabulary and sentence starters are very helpful for me

Outcomes

The pupil profiles are an important part of the school's robust transition arrangements with its partner schools and help ensure all staff understand pupils' needs before they arrive at the school. This enables them to provide appropriate strategies from the moment pupils arrive at the school.

- 44 Nearly all primary schools visited work closely with their partner primary and secondary schools to ensure that transition activities meet the needs of individual children and their families.

Staff at **Brynnau Primary School** take considerable care to ensure that they address any concerns and anxieties swiftly, including arranging additional visits to the secondary school for pupils who lack confidence, and providing social stories to support pupils' understanding of transition through visual images of their new school.

Gaer Primary School works actively with neighbouring primary schools and the local authority to consider whether it is the most appropriate provision for prospective pupils. For example, if a pupil is being considered for the school's resource base, a member of staff from Gaer Primary School will visit the pupil's current school to find out if the resource base provision is suitable. If the consensus is that it is in the best interests of the pupil to remain at their current school, staff from Gaer Primary School will work with the home school to help the child remain there.

- 45 In nearly all the schools we visited with specialist classes or resource bases, where pupils move between mainstream classes and the resource base, communication between the staff in the two settings is strong and supports pupils' movement within the school very effectively. In these schools, staff in the resource base work effectively with staff in the rest of the school to share their specialised knowledge and promote strategies to support them successfully around the school.
- 46 At Cogan Primary School, pupils who attend the school's hearing resource base (HRB) are fully integrated into the life of the school. All staff work together very effectively to ensure that all pupils, including those with SEN, are fully included in all aspects of school life.

Case study 7: Cogan Primary School

Information about the school

Cogan Primary School is in the Cogan area of Penarth in the Vale of Glamorgan local authority. In January 2019 there were 205 pupils on roll between 4 and 11 years of age, organised into seven classes. The school has a HRB for children from the local authority. On average over the last three years, approximately 10% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is below the Wales average. Twenty-two per cent (22%) of pupils have SEN. A very few pupils have statements of SEN.

Action

Many pupils who attend the HRB have a range of SEN in addition to their hearing impairment (HI). The HRB and its staff provide pupils with a supportive base which prepares them for independence and gradual integration to mainstream classes. There are daily sessions in the HRB, during which pupils receive the emotional and learning support that they need. For example, pupils start each day at the HRB and have an opportunity to check in and address any emotional needs before they transfer to mainstream classes. During the day, pupils visit the base to ensure they have the support that they need to succeed in mainstream classes and to have their needs and progress carefully assessed. For instance, staff pre-tutor pupils by reading class books together so that pupils understand the vocabulary and are familiar with any sign language that they will need in advance of the lesson.

The specialist teacher in the HRB ensures that all classes, including mainstream classes, are deaf-friendly by carrying out regular training and offering support and advice on a more informal basis. For example she makes sure that in all classes teachers:

- have the pupil's attention before they start to talk
- face the pupil when speaking, so that they can rely on lip reading and gesture to understand what is being said
- encourage other pupils to speak one at a time

- ensure that there is good lighting to light up the face of the speaker
- use visual aids such as pictures and models
- keep background noise to a minimum
- are trained in using radio microphones, if this is appropriate for the pupil that they are supporting.

In addition, the physical elements of all areas of the school are as 'deaf-friendly' as possible. For example, most areas of the HRB and the mainstream school have specialist flooring, such as acoustic tiles and carpeted areas. This ensures that pupils with hearing loss have the best physical environment possible to learn in, wherever they are in the school.

Support staff accompany pupils to mainstream classes and provide high levels of very effective support when it is needed. Detailed advance preparation enables teaching staff to include pupils fully in their mainstream lessons and help them experience success. Every class teacher understands the importance of their role in teaching pupils with SEN and they adopt appropriate practices to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with HI. Relationships between teachers and support staff are strong. HRB support staff regularly advise mainstream teachers in best practice when supporting pupils with HI. As a result, provision for pupils with HI and levels of inclusion are very good.

Every pupil has a one-page profile, which details the pupils' strengths, who or what is important to them and crucially, how adults and peers can help them to learn. These profiles ensure that all adults have a visual reminder of how best to support pupils and how to meet their learning and emotional needs.

The school's commitment to the full inclusion of pupils with hearing impairment is evident in the daily life of the school. There are high profile, whole-school events, such as the annual deaf awareness week, during which all pupils take part in a challenge, such as signing their name and address. There is always a 'sign of the week,' which all pupils learn and use with their peers, regardless of their needs. This type of activity promotes an ethos of mutual understanding and respect, where every pupil matters and everyone's needs are met.

Outcomes

Pupils with HI make good progress during their time in school. A minority make exceptional progress and reach age-appropriate outcomes by the time they leave the school. Pupils with HI speak positively about the skills that they gain and the support they receive from the HRB and mainstream staff and peers. Mainstream pupils also speak positively about the impact that the HRB has on their experience at school and their learning and wellbeing. For example, they feel that being able to sign is a useful skill that they will use throughout their lives.

- 47 Many of the secondary schools visited have supportive arrangements to help pupils progress to future destinations. For example, staff at Dwr y Felin make regular visits to the local further education college and work places to support pupils to familiarise themselves with the college building. This work complements transition events organised by the college and helps pupils to make a successful transition after their GCSE examinations. Staff at Ysgol Gyfun Tredegar have well-established and productive links with further education and training providers to ensure that pupils with SEN progress onto programmes that suit their needs. The school works closely with pupils and parents prior to the end of Year 11 to prepare pupils for their chosen destination. This includes arranging visits, organising transport and enabling pupils to practise their transport arrangements.

Sharing good practice

- 48 Nearly all of the schools visited benefit from close working relationships with SENCos in other schools, often mediated through local cluster networks or representatives from the consortium. In a minority of schools, the SENCo holds a position of responsibility outside the school, for example as a cluster lead or is on a part-time secondment to the local authority. In these cases, the SENCo is in a particularly strong position to identify strong practice in other schools and share this with others. Equally, this work supports the school to keep its own provision under review. This contributes significantly to the evaluation of its work and to identify areas for improvement or plan relevant staff training.
- 49 These networks provide valuable opportunities for primary and secondary colleagues to work together to share approaches that extend beyond planning for transition or the specific requirements of a particular cohort. For example, schools work together to plan for aspects of ALN reform with regard to person-centred practice or writing individual development plans, or simply to share aspects of good practice.

Ysgol Rhosybol works closely with other primary schools in its cluster. Termly meetings between the SENCOs in all the primary schools are very productive and include worthwhile opportunities for professional dialogue to discuss strategies and initiatives to meet the needs of the most vulnerable pupils in the schools.

Following the termly meeting in spring 2019, for example, all schools created a 'Don't Worry' book, based on a model developed by staff at Ysgol Rhosybol. This book focuses on issues that cause concern for the pupils. For example, on one page dedicated to nightmares, pupils suggest strategies that can be used to overcome their worries. On this page, the advice encourages pupils to:

- share their dreams with someone
- suggest explanations
- read before they turn off the light – to relax themselves
- think about 'nice things' before they turn off the lights
- stop watching television before turning off the lights

Other topics include:

- falling out with a friend
- getting lost
- being made fun of
- losing something
- breaking something

If a particular worry is not in the book, pupils write it on a piece of paper and place it in the worry box (Blwch Becso). A group of pupils then get together to develop strategies that can be used to overcome the worry and add it to the book.

Pupils are much more attentive than they were before the worry box arrived. Pupils and staff agree that there is far less attention-seeking behaviour and consequently more time spent on task, focusing on their learning.

- 50 Many schools work very productively with the local authority to share good practice with staff in other schools and to learn from them. In schools with resource bases, teachers frequently provide advice and support to other mainstream schools without resource bases.

A particularly strong feature of **Rhosymedre Community Primary School's** partnership working with schools is its outreach programme, 'Primary Steps'. Staff from Rhosymedre provide staff in other schools with advice and practical strategies to support challenging pupils based on tried and tested techniques it has developed in its own nurture base. The school has provided beneficial training for support staff from other schools in the local authority about adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of individual pupils.

Maendy Primary School engages widely within its community and the local authority to receive and share support. This enriches its own provision and the provision of other schools. For example, the teacher-in-charge of the resource base provides outreach advice for local schools. This includes visiting pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties in other schools to carry out observations and provide advice to teachers and support staff. As part of her role, she also facilitates regular meetings between all local SENCos. These meetings allow schools to share timely and valuable advice and foster an ethos of collaborative working across schools.

- 51 A minority of schools have developed valuable links with local special schools. Generally, this is because it allows them to access specialist provision for pupils' SEN, which is not readily available elsewhere in the local authority, for example, hydrotherapy provision for pupils with complex physical needs. In a few schools, staff are developing more extensive links with neighbouring special schools to share their good practice and develop professional learning to support pupils with SEN in their own schools. In Caerphilly, for example, Cwm Ifor Primary School and St Cenydd Community School have built an innovative partnership with Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre which supports pupils, parents and teaching staff very effectively.

Case study 8: Cwm Ifor Primary School, St Cenydd Community School and Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre

Information about the school

Cwm Ifor Primary School is on the Penyrheol estate in Caerphilly. In January 2019 there were 268 pupils on roll, including 37 nursery pupils. Forty-one per cent (41.0%) of pupils are eligible for free schools meals. This is much higher than the national average of 18.4%. Twenty-two per cent (22%) of pupils have SEN. A very few pupils have a statement of SEN.

St Cenydd Community School is an English-medium 11 to 18 mixed comprehensive school, situated on the western side of the town of Caerphilly. In January 2019 there were 1,022 pupils on roll. Around 24% of

pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is higher than the national average of 16.4%. Thirty-one point seven per cent (31.7%) of pupils have SEN, and 4.1% of pupils have a statement of SEN.

Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre is the only special school serving the county borough of Caerphilly. In January 2019 there were 158 pupils on roll aged from 3 to 19 years. Around 40% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Nearly all pupils have a statement of SEN for severe learning difficulties, physical and medical difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders (ASD).

Action

In September 2014, in partnership with the local authority and Cwm Ifor Primary School, Trinity Fields developed a satellite class for primary-aged pupils from the special school who would benefit from placement in specialist provision at a mainstream school. Currently, there are seven pupils and four members of staff based at the Cwm Ifor satellite class. Pupils spend four days a week at Cwm Ifor. Every Thursday, they attend Trinity Fields where they access its specialist resources, such as the hydrotherapy pool, rebound therapy and sensory rooms.

At Cwm Ifor, pupils join whole-school assemblies, weekly awards meetings and attend mainstream lessons, when appropriate. They access the school dinner hall in the same way as the mainstream pupils, choosing and collecting their food independently. They interact with friends on the school playground and participate in school trips.

Following on from the success of the satellite at Cwm Ifor, Trinity Fields, in partnership with the local authority, developed a satellite class at St Cenydd Community School in 2017 for secondary-aged pupils. The class was based initially at Trinity Fields, then moved to St Cenydd when the pupils were ready for the move. There are currently eight pupils and four members of staff based in the satellite class.

Pupils spend four days a week at St Cenydd. On one of these days, they access the living skills room, where they learn important skills that they will need in their future lives, such as cooking. On Fridays, they attend Trinity Fields, where they participate in whole-school events, attend swimming lessons and music lessons and use the outdoor learning resources.

The staff who work in the two satellite classes are Trinity Fields staff, who are chosen carefully for their expertise in SEN but also for their ability to work effectively in a mainstream setting. They are employed by the special school, but are included fully in all aspects of the mainstream school, including whole-school meetings.

There are many factors that have contributed to the success of the satellite classes. These include:

- a shared ethos between all schools

- a strong trust between the headteachers and other staff at Trinity Fields and the two mainstream schools
- very regular liaison between the special school and the mainstream schools
- the enthusiasm of the headteachers, who have been instrumental in setting up the provisions
- very committed, enthusiastic staff
- strong commitment from the governing bodies of both schools
- helpful support from the local authority, which has given the schools the freedom to develop the provisions without having to consult the local authority at every step
- clear partnership agreements between the local authority, the special school and the mainstream schools, setting out clearly the roles and responsibilities of each partner
- very careful planning prior to opening the satellite classes
- careful appointment of staff to work in the satellite classes
- shared expectations of pupils within the host school, for example, all pupils who attend the satellite classes wear the same school uniform as pupils in the host school

Outcomes

Developing the two satellite classes has had a significant impact on the pupils' wellbeing and learning. This includes noticeable progress in relation to:

- improved behaviour
- enjoyment in learning
- greater social interaction, especially at lunch and breaktimes, in assemblies and concerts
- increased confidence and independence
- enhanced communication skills
- personal resilience and emotional wellbeing
- friendships with mainstream pupils

In addition, at St Cenydd, pupils show:

- improved attendance
- improved approaches to personal care

The dual placement across the mainstream and special schools means that pupils benefit from the opportunities offered by a mainstream setting, but continue to access the specialist resources and expertise that they require at the special school.

Mainstream pupils at the two schools also benefit from their exposure to the satellite classes. They develop a strong sense of empathy and a clear understanding of diversity. A buddy system allows selected mainstream pupils to go into the satellite class to interact with pupils there. This has

had a significant impact on individual pupils who have gained in confidence and understanding through their role as buddies.

Mainstream staff benefit from the presence of the satellite classes and the strong links with the special school. In particular, they learn from the expertise of staff working in the satellite class, who they can go to for advice on how to support pupils with a range of SEN. Equally, staff working in the satellite class increase their knowledge of mainstream strategies, some of which they can replicate in the special class setting.

The development of the classes has had a positive impact on parents and carers in the host schools, who demonstrate an increased understanding of inclusion and diversity as a result. In a few cases, parents who had been reluctant to consider a specialist placement for their children have been reassured by the success of the classes and have accepted that a specialist placement would be the best option for their child.

Multi-agency working

- 52 In nearly all of the schools visited, successful multi-agency working is an essential part of the school's day-to-day support for pupils with SEN. These schools work extremely productively with a broad range of partners, including an extensive range of external agencies. They respond thoughtfully to the advice from these professionals to inform the planning of provision for pupils and the setting of targets on pupils' IEPs.
- 53 The range of external agencies and specialist services that schools work with varies considerably between schools, depending on the range and complexity of their pupils' needs. Typically, they include educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, representatives from local health boards, medical services and specialist nurses, specialists in visual and hearing impairments, counselling services, child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), local authority inclusion services and the police.
- 54 Schools co-ordinate the services these agencies provide very effectively to ensure their staff have the understanding, skills and strategies to support pupils' complex needs.

Ysgol Uwchradd Tywyn has developed highly effective links with external agencies in order to access a wide range of interventions to support pupils' progress, wellbeing and social development within the school. As part of this, the school has had to implement robust structures and protocols to co-ordinate its multi-agency working. A key element of this is the multi-agency 'Hwb' meeting that is held monthly at the school to discuss pupils with SEN. The SENCo, wellbeing co-ordinator, school nurse, counsellor, an autism nurse the county's Welfare Officer, a representative from CAMHS, and the TRAC officer (a local authority scheme to support the skills of vulnerable pupils) attend these meetings. Together, team members discuss the academic and emotional needs of SEN, as well as the additional provision available to support them inside and outside the school.

- 55 In schools where this collaboration is particularly strong, open lines of communication between the schools and external agencies allow for ongoing informal communication alongside planned meetings. In these schools, staff have ready access by telephone or email to specialist staff, which helps them to respond swiftly to issues as they arise and implement interventions promptly. This enables pupils whose needs might otherwise require more specialised support to succeed in mainstream provision.
- 56 In a few schools, specialist staff provide informal advice clinics or drop-in sessions on days they are in school that school staff can attend on an ad hoc basis. This investment of time and goodwill helps significantly to build the confidence and understanding of staff across the school and enables them to become more adept at using the strategies recommended. This supports staff to become more skilled at identifying emerging issues at an early stage and results in fewer referrals to the local authority to access these services.
- 57 Over time, most schools make careful use of the close collaboration with specialist staff to upskill and enhance the professional learning of their own staff. In particular, they develop the capacity of the learning support team to administer programmes planned by specialist staff skilfully.

At **Blaen y Cwm Primary School**, leaders have engaged resourcefully with external agencies to develop the capacity of their own staff to identify and assess pupils' needs. As part of this, the SENCo and leadership team have developed a comprehensive professional learning offer for their staff, supported by external agencies. As a result, they are able to deploy a wide range of strategies and interventions before needing to engage with these agencies. This ensures that they are well prepared and informed of pupils' needs and support requirements.

- 58 Many schools have developed valuable links with third sector organisations that offer a wide range of services for pupils with SEN, including parent support groups, resources and specialist facilities. These schools provide help and advice for parents to access support from these groups, including assistance in completing application forms or arranging travel to attend open days. Where parents have learning difficulties themselves, this assistance is crucial in ensuring their children can take advantage of the services they provide. This 'signposting' function enables parents and carers to access beneficial opportunities for their children to access outdoor learning, exercise facilities and youth clubs after school, on the holidays and at weekends.

Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf has developed beneficial links with a social enterprise organisation and local businesses to enable pupils from its resource base to take part in external work experience. This includes pupils with complex needs, including Downs Syndrome and ASD. In order to achieve this, the school has developed very effective partnerships with a range of local organisations, including a local supermarket, old people's care home, shoe shop and a hairdressing salon.

A local social enterprise enables pupils with the most complex needs to take part in regular placements at a garden nursery and wood workshop. This work experience is built into their individual timetables, in most cases for one day a week throughout the year. Through these placements, pupils develop skills that are important in the world of work, such as social and communication skills, teamwork, appropriate dress and the importance of arriving at work on time.

The school has also developed a very beneficial partnership with several branches of a supermarket, where pupils learn to stack shelves, organise items according to date, wear a uniform and serve customers. Pupils who carry out work experience in the kitchens at an old people's home learn the importance of hygiene, the use of knives and being polite to clients.

- 59 A key element of accessing the support of specialist services successfully is the skill of staff at the school in completing referral documentation promptly and effectively. Where schools are most successful in ensuring this support is in place, they advocate strongly for their pupils and families and provide robust challenge when the support provided does not meet pupils' needs. However, in a minority of the schools we visited, staff expressed concerns about the support from external agencies, in particular the availability of specialist input to support pupils' mental health, and the consistency of attendance at multi-agency meetings co-ordinated by the school.

Effective leadership for SEN

Leading a whole-school approach to the provision for SEN

- 60 In nearly all the schools we visited, senior leaders establish a highly inclusive vision and ethos that sets high aspirations for all pupils, whatever their abilities and needs. This vision is based securely on providing equality of opportunity for all pupils and permeates all aspects of the school's work. Leaders and governors communicate this vision strongly and ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities for pupils with SEN. As a result, these leaders are very successful in promoting the development of caring and supportive environments, where all pupils are encouraged to grow as individuals and achieve well in relation to their starting points.
- 61 In many schools, governors share this vision, and play an active role in monitoring the effectiveness of the provision. They visit regularly and take part in school activities that celebrate the achievements of pupils with SEN or whole-school training on autism awareness, for example. They receive up-to-date information on the progress of pupils with SEN through termly reports to the governing body.
- 62 In these schools, leaders ensure that the wellbeing of all pupils has high priority. All staff in the school understand that, unless they meet the emotional and physical needs of their pupils, they will not be able to address their specific learning needs. This understanding is the starting point of the school's strategic planning and is deeply rooted in the culture of the school.

Pupils at **Maendy Primary School** have a wide range of SEN, ranging from specific learning difficulties to emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. Senior leaders have developed a strongly inclusive vision that focuses clearly on building the emotional resilience of pupils and equipping them with the skills they need to make progress in their learning. To achieve this, they ensure staff work together with a clear and shared purpose. In line with their motto 'Nurture, Partnership and Inspire', all staff develop valuable partnerships with parents, agencies, local schools and the local authority to enrich their own provision, and to influence and inspire the provision of other settings.

At **Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenffrwd**, leaders recognise that school residential trips can cause particular anxiety. This includes pupils who have problems with bed-wetting and girls who have started their periods. The school puts effective strategies in place to reassure pupils and their parents. Around a month before a trip, the headteacher and trip leader meet with parents and pupils to discuss these sensitive issues. They create a one-page profile specifically for the trip, noting the aspects with which the pupil will need help. As a result, pupils are able to enjoy the trips without worrying about how they will manage.

- 63 In many of the schools we visited, leaders ensure that pupils with SEN, including those in resource bases, have access to all activities, alongside their peers. These pupils take on positions of responsibility within the school, and during lessons. This enables them to develop their independence and self-esteem. The school community celebrates all pupils' achievements equally, for example, in assemblies, concerts, sporting events and school eisteddfodau. As a result, pupils across the school have a strong understanding of what it means to be included and inclusive. They are quick to notice when one of their peers is having a problem and are eager to help. This inclusive approach helps pupils with SEN to develop confidence in discussing their difficulties and the support they need to succeed, while their peers develop empathy and understanding for others.

At **Tywyn Primary School**, all pupils with SEN have access to all activities alongside their peers, including taking on worthwhile positions of responsibility within the school. For example, they sit on the school council and the eco committee. They serve as digital leaders and members of the Criw Cymraeg. During the eisteddfod and sports days, house captains and sports captains become very enthusiastic when motivating their teams. A pupil from one of the learning resource classes has taken on the role of 'chief gardener', which involves watering the plants, turning over the soil, weeding and planting. Pupils are enthusiastic when talking about their roles and take pride in their achievements.

Pupils with significant learning difficulties take on responsibility through taking their class register from the classroom to the school office, accompanied by a buddy. They do this confidently and without adult support. This enables them to develop their independence and their sense of wellbeing.

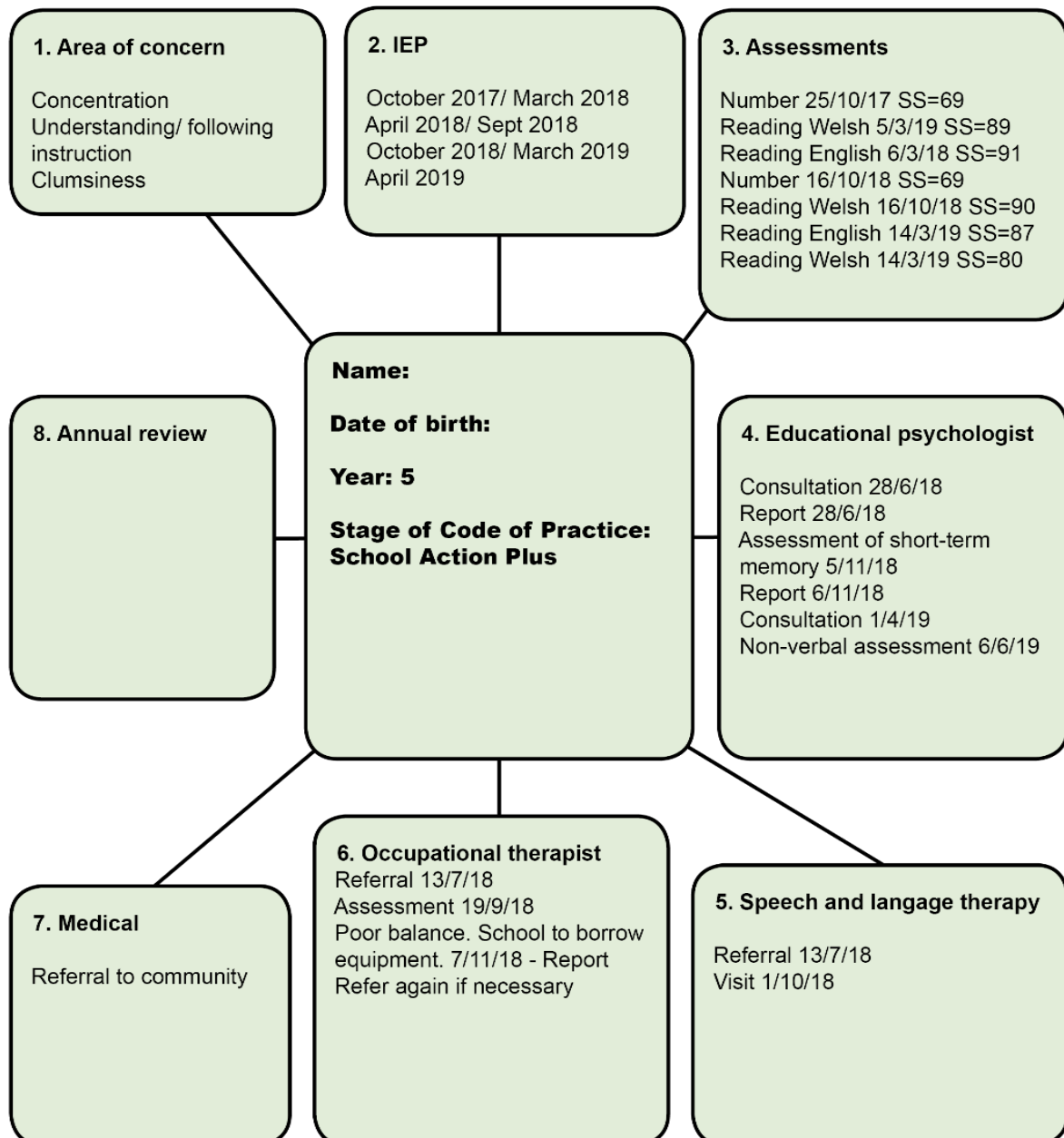
Pupils with SEN from the resource classes and mainstream classes take part enthusiastically and confidently in assemblies. During assemblies, staff and pupils use basic signing when they sing a song. A member of staff runs classes for staff and pupils who want to develop their signing further. This has resulted in situations where pupils have used signing to communicate basic instructions to their non-verbal peers.

The school holds an achievement assembly at the end of the week, which involves pupils choosing one of their peers for an award. This includes non-verbal pupils who announce the chosen pupil using their preferred method of communication. This whole-school approach has a positive effect on pupils' academic achievement and ensures that pupils engage happily in school and feel more confident about their learning.

- 64 In most schools, leaders have established robust processes to communicate the needs of pupils to all staff. They ensure that all staff are well informed of pupils' needs through regular awareness-raising sessions at the start of each term or academic year, the use of online information systems and through high-quality

documentation such as one-page profiles and support plans. As a result, staff in these schools know pupils well and use this information effectively to plan engaging activities that support the development of pupils with SEN well.

At **Ysgol Gynradd Bontnewydd**, staff use a detailed individual pupil provision map to record pupil assessment data and input from outside agencies. This allows staff to see at a glance the information they need regarding an individual pupil, as demonstrated in the following example:



At **Ysgol Uwchradd Tywyn**, leaders communicate information about pupils, strategies and interventions very effectively to all staff. A discussion about specific pupils with SEN is on the staff's morning agenda every week, and a staff meeting is held every half-term to present information and discuss strategies for SEN pupils. Leaders also discuss provision for pupils' special needs in the leadership team meeting every Friday morning and, as a result, are aware of pupils' needs and able to deal with them effectively.

- 65 In the most effective schools, staff have valuable opportunities to share information about pupils' engagement in learning and wellbeing through team meetings and referral processes. As a result, all staff understand that they have responsibility for meeting pupils' needs, and lines of communication across the school are clear. Leaders use the information gathered thoughtfully to adjust the support for pupils or to adapt the curriculum to meet pupils' changing emotional and behavioural needs.

At **Fitzalan High School**, the Curriculum Access Team works across the school to ensure that pupils with SEN receive the most appropriate curriculum provision, support and intervention to help them achieve well. The team consists of middle leaders with responsibility for English as an additional language, behaviour emotional and social difficulties, nurture, wellbeing and the learning support unit, and the SENCo. They meet regularly to coordinate and review the day-to-day provision for these pupils and to ensure that targeted individual programmes and interventions are in place to support them.

- 66 In nearly all schools visited, SENCos, teachers and learning support staff work together effectively to support pupils and promote their progress based on clearly defined roles and responsibilities. The SENCo plays a prominent role in the school and is often a member of the senior leadership team. This ensures that all leaders retain a strong focus on the wellbeing and achievement of pupils with SEN.
- 67 In many secondary schools, SENCos liaise closely with staff across the school, including heads of year, pastoral staff and SEN link staff within departments to ensure the needs of pupils are understood and addressed. This effective distribution of roles and close communication is underpinned by robust systems to record and share information about individual pupils.
- 68 Following the creation of the new school, leaders and managers at Ysgol Bae Baglan have worked successfully to implement robust structures to promote the achievement of pupils with SEN. As a result, they have secured high standards of wellbeing for all pupils, regardless of ability or level of need.

Case study 9: Ysgol Bae Baglan

Information about the school

Ysgol Bae Baglan is an English-medium 3 to 16 all-age school, maintained by Neath Port Talbot local authority. In January 2019 there were 1,513 pupils on roll with 1,214 of secondary school age and 299 pupils of primary school age. The school hosts a resource base for 120 key stage 3 and key stage 4 pupils with SEN.

Over 30% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is higher than the national average of 16.4% for secondary schools and 18.4% for primary schools. The percentage of pupils with SEN is around 27%, which is higher than the national average of 22.6% for secondary schools and 20.7% for primary schools. Currently, about 10.2% of pupils have statements of SEN, which is well above the national average of 2.2% for secondary schools and 1.6% for primary schools.

Action

Since the opening of the new school, senior leaders have established a strongly inclusive vision for the school. Given the high proportion of pupils who require extra support, and the wide range of pupils' SEN, senior leaders have prioritised establishing robust approaches to promote the inclusion and wellbeing of all pupils, including those with SEN.

The roles of staff who support pupils with SEN are clearly defined and well distributed. For example, the assistant headteacher with responsibility for pupils with SEN is a member of the school's senior leadership team and ensures that the needs of these pupils are at the heart of the school's strategic planning. The SENCo is responsible for pupils on the SEN register at school action or school action plus, as well as for pupil inclusion and support. The head of the resource base has responsibility for statemented pupils and those with more complex needs. Pupils with complex needs also benefit from the support of specialist staff in areas such as speech and language or ASD.

This team works closely with the school's pastoral team to ensure support for pupils is co-ordinated effectively across the school. In addition, each pupil with a statement has a pastoral lead worker to support them. These staff act as a point of contact for the pupil during the school day and help set the targets on pupils' plans. They work with pupils to complete their one-page profiles, as well as more detailed versions for teaching staff that include strategies to support them in lessons.

These strong systems of pastoral support ensure there is a high degree of collaboration and communication between the work of the SEN team and teachers across the school. The SENCo meets regularly with the learning director for each phase of the school to discuss the progress of pupils on the register and to consider which pupils might need referring to the

school's pupil panel. This group – which includes key school staff as well as representatives from external agencies such as CAMHS, education psychology and the education welfare officer – co-ordinates specialist interventions to support the work of the school. This highly effective multi-agency working ensures that the school is able to respond promptly to pupils' needs as they emerge.

The school makes highly effective use of an online notebook and document management system to promote team-working across the school. This tool provides access to a comprehensive range of information relating to individual pupils, including pupils' pastoral diaries, IEPs, one-page profiles, statements, and health care plans. The consistent and systematic use of this software ensures that all staff have up-to-date information about individual pupils. As a result, all staff working with pupils with SEN have detailed and thorough information relating to the needs and progress of each child.

Leaders use this resource effectively to promote teaching staff's ability and confidence to support pupils with SEN. In addition to information about individual pupils, the site provides comprehensive information about a wide range of conditions and difficulties such as ADHD, dyslexia, ASD, visual impairment, HI, and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. This resource enables teaching staff to recognise the signs and symptoms of these conditions, understand the strategies required to support pupils and know which staff in the school have particular expertise in these areas.

Outcomes

The quality of care, support and guidance is a strong feature of the school. Tailored interventions address the needs of individual pupils successfully and with great sensitivity. This helps them to engage positively in their learning. Across the school, many pupils with SEN make strong progress against their targets and by the end of key stage 4, many of these pupils make exceptional progress.

- 69 In nearly all the schools visited, support staff play an essential role in supporting the progress and wellbeing for pupils with SEN. Generally, leaders match individual support staff responsibilities carefully to their specific skills and experience. This enables them to lead a wide range of interventions very effectively. These include programmes designed to improve pupils' skills in aspects of literacy and numeracy, as well as programmes to address pupils' communication, emotional and behavioural, and complex medical and physical needs. The leadership and deployment of support staff is a critical element in the success of these schools.

Professional learning and building capacity

- 70 In most of the schools we visited, leaders provide well-planned specialist training for staff to support pupils with SEN. In these schools, the SENCo works closely with other senior leaders to develop the skills of staff, based on a thorough understanding

of the needs of individual pupils. Professional learning opportunities link well to performance management processes and enable all staff to develop their understanding of SEN as a whole, as well as the specific expertise to support individual pupils.

- 71 Most schools provide a variety of professional learning opportunities for staff. These include whole-school INSET days, bespoke training based on the needs of individual pupils, and staff and team meetings that include regular, calendared opportunities to ensure staff have a clear understanding of pupils' needs. In the most effective schools, leaders facilitate valuable opportunities for staff to observe or work alongside each other to share learning across wider staff teams. For example, in the majority of schools with resource bases visited, flexible staffing arrangements mean that staff have valuable opportunities to work across mainstream classes and the resource base. This is particularly helpful in developing the expertise of staff working in mainstream classes.

Dwr y Felin Comprehensive School provides highly effective professional learning for teachers and support staff. This ensures they understand the needs of all individuals and plan their lessons well to support pupils with SEN. A key feature of the school's work in this area is the role of SEN 'link teachers' in each department. These teachers ensure close communication between the SENCo and subject departments. They attend regular meetings with the SENCo to discuss the progress of pupils with identified needs and the strategies to support them, and have time at every departmental meeting to share this information with their departments. This initiative has helped all teachers to develop their understanding of how to promote the learning of pupils with SEN.

- 72 Most schools work successfully with a wide variety of partners to access professional learning and training to support the needs of their pupils. For example, many schools work effectively with local schools to share learning and good practice that enhance provision and raise standards of wellbeing. External agencies provide valuable specialist training to support the specific needs of individual pupils. For example, at Brynnau Primary, all staff benefit from training provided by the specialist nurse on peg feeding and stoma care, while the local authority inclusion department provides training for support staff on understanding autism.
- 73 In many schools, because of the close joint working between external specialist staff and support staff, learning support staff play a key role in ensuring all staff across the school understand the strategies needed to support pupils. At Rhosymedre Community Primary School, this forms part of a well-planned programme of professional learning across the school to develop all staff as confident, informed practitioners.

Case study 10: Rhosymedre Community Primary School

Information about the school

Rhosymedre Community Primary School is on the edge of a large housing development, south of Wrexham, between Ruabon and Llangollen. The area is a former Communities First area and faces the challenges linked with social and economic deprivation.

In January 2019 there were 237 pupils on roll aged from 3 to 11 years of age, including 21 part-time nursery pupils. The school hosts a local authority resource for pupils in key stage 2 with moderate learning difficulties and a nurture resource for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Forty-one point four per cent (41.4%) of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is much higher than the Wales average of 18.4%. Around 43% of pupils are on the SEN register, which is much higher than the Wales average of 21%. A very few pupils have a statement of SEN.

Action

In order to meet the needs of the community it serves, the school has invested over a long period of time in programmes that support the emotional and social wellbeing of pupils. Senior leaders facilitate a comprehensive range of opportunities for staff to enhance their skills, for example, through attending external training, working together with teaching staff from different phases, and internal training facilitated by the school's own staff or external trainers.

The SENCo and senior leaders play a central role in developing the skills of staff, based on a thorough understanding of the needs of individual pupils and those of the cohort as a whole. They liaise closely with external agencies to arrange training for staff that enables them to support successfully a valuable range of well-planned interventions to develop pupils' speech and language skills, for example, or to meet pupils' physiotherapy needs on a daily basis.

As a result of this training, staff have detailed knowledge of pupils' needs and circumstances. They use this understanding to deploy a wide range of interventions and person-centred approaches to meeting individual pupils' needs. Teaching staff are flexible and highly skilled in adapting the provision to ensure this gives each child what he or she needs at that time. This includes modifications to the curriculum, ensuring pupils have suitable opportunities for 'time out' of lessons when they need it, developing personalised reward systems that build on pupils' own interests and aspirations, and ensuring that all staff are consistent in their application of these strategies.

Staff at all levels benefit from valuable opportunities to lead whole-school

training based on their individual areas and expertise and to share their knowledge of individual pupils. For example, the school's emotional wellbeing co-ordinator has recently delivered training on emotional coaching for staff to support their work with pupils and parents. Teachers from the school's nurture base and nursery class work with staff in schools across the local authority to share their understanding of how to support pupils with SEN based on tried and tested strategies.

These well-planned opportunities for professional learning link closely to the organisation of roles and responsibilities within the school and to the arrangements for performance management. All support staff have specific areas of responsibility and expertise in addition to the learning support they provide to pupils in the classroom. This includes responsibility for developing pupils' reading and writing skills, for example, or for co-ordinating the school's support for emotional wellbeing across the school.

The highly effective distribution of roles across the staff team, supported by suitable development and training for staff, is a notable feature of the school's work. It promotes very successfully the skills of all staff and the development of a cohesive team who are clear about their roles and take pride in the contribution they make to pupils' wellbeing and the progress that they make in their learning.

Outcomes

As a result of the excellent care, support and guidance provided by staff at the school, most pupils, including those with SEN and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress from their starting points. Pupils speak articulately and openly about the difficulties they face in their learning and how the strategies the school uses have helped them to overcome these.

- 74 In the most effective schools, all staff can access training to meet the needs of pupils' SEN, including administrative and relevant ancillary staff, for example, examination invigilators, midday supervisors, and caretaking staff. In these schools, all staff are confident that they understand pupils' needs and that they have the skills to address these.

At **Tredegar Comprehensive School**, a committed and knowledgeable team of support staff makes an important contribution to the provision of specialist learning and wellbeing support for pupils with SEN. Senior leaders and the SENCo have high expectations for the learning support team and encourage them to take on leadership roles within their particular area of expertise. To achieve this, the school has invested in extensive professional learning for the learning support team. Support staff take ownership of the initiatives they lead and work closely with teachers to contribute to the planning for provision for pupils with SEN. As a result, they feel valued and empowered to lead highly effective personal and learning support for pupils with SEN.

In addition, the school has provided valuable training for examination invigilators to ensure that they provide pupils with SEN with effective access arrangements during examinations. Teachers utilise these arrangements during internal examinations or tests in lessons so that pupils with SEN become familiar with procedures to support them in examination conditions. Senior staff and the SENCO consider examination arrangements carefully to remove barriers that might have a negative impact on the wellbeing and success of pupils with SEN. For instance, depending on need, these pupils sit their examination in a separate room if they find normal examination conditions challenging. This careful planning to develop all staff's understanding of the needs of pupils with SEN ensures that they receive the very best support as they move through the school.

- 75 In many of the schools visited with a specialist class or resource base, the close collaboration between staff helps to develop the skills of all staff working with pupils with SEN. For example, staff from Ysgol Bro Pedr's specialist unit 'Canolfan y Bont' deliver training to all staff on the use of social stories in working with pupils with ASD. At Maendy Primary, staff working in the school's nurture base regularly provide mainstream teaching staff with guidance on approaches for working with pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. At Parcyrhun Primary, there are very strong links between staff who work in the on-site specialist unit for hearing-impaired pupils and in mainstream classes. The SENCO and the teacher responsible for the unit communicate effectively to ensure that the pupils that attend mainstream sessions are able to cope well. The deaf pupils' teacher meets the mainstream teachers individually every week to plan together. This collaborative working helps all staff to develop their skills to support the needs of HI pupils.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning

- 76 In nearly all schools visited, leaders monitor and evaluate carefully the progress of pupils with SEN and adapt their provision accordingly. In these schools, effective self-evaluation proceeds from a robust understanding of each pupil's needs and a willingness to adjust the provision where necessary to ensure they can continue to make progress in line with their abilities. This approach informs staff training well. In the most effective schools, leaders review the needs of pupils and the skill set of

support and teaching staff regularly to ensure support promotes pupils' progress and wellbeing effectively.

- 77 At Blaen y Cwm County Primary School, effective self-evaluation has helped to improve the school's provision mapping and secure stronger outcomes for pupils with SEN.

Case study 11: Blaen y Cwm County Primary School

Information about the school

Blaen y Cwm County Primary School serves the communities of Brynmawr and Nantyglo in the Blaenau Gwent local authority. In January 2019 there were 314 pupils aged three to eleven years on roll. 32.5% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is much higher than the average for Wales of 18.4%. Around 18% of pupils have SEN, which is below the national average of 21%. A very few pupils have a statement of SEN.

Action

When the headteacher took up post in 2015, she identified that, although a large number of pupils had IEPs, these were not always having the desired impact on raising standards for these pupils. To address this, the headteacher and her leadership team reviewed all IEPs systematically. This process led to the implementation of a revised whole school provision map which identifies successfully the provision available to all pupils, the interventions required and any specific support individual pupils may need.

The whole school provision mapping developed by the SENCO is a significant strength of the school's work. The mapping sets clear expectations of all staff and has secured a detailed understanding of how best to support all pupils. The provision map has three levels:

- Level one is the whole school approach to 'quality first' teaching. This outlines expectations of all teachers and support staff to provide a high quality learning environment.
- Level two identifies targeted and structured interventions which have clear entry and exit criteria to support pupils to make more rapid progress.
- Finally, level three is where the school provides specific and tailored intervention or strategies to support identified areas of SEN. These pupils would have an IEP.

This structure has been shared effectively with all staff who understand clearly their responsibility for providing 'quality first' teaching for the SEN pupils in their class. As a result, the school has reduced significantly the number of pupils requiring IEPs.

Outcomes

The school's provision mapping has been highly effective in improving the quality of teaching for pupils with SEN and has ensured that teachers are accountable for all pupils' progress. As part of their provision mapping, intervention programmes are highly effective and have consistently strong impact on pupil progress. Most pupils who engage in interventions make strong and sustained progress.

- 78 In most of the schools visited, leaders evaluate their curriculum planning regularly to ensure the provision meets the needs of individual pupils or different cohorts of pupils with SEN.

At Dwr y Felin Comprehensive School, leaders ensure the school's arrangements for self-evaluation focus clearly on outcomes and provision for pupils with SEN. The headteacher and senior leadership team share their vision of high standards of wellbeing and inclusivity very clearly with all staff through regular professional learning and whole school meetings. Over the past five years, the school has focussed closely on developing staff knowledge and understanding of SEN. In addition, they adapt and develop their curriculum regularly to cater successfully for the needs of all individuals.

A notable example of this is the way in which the leadership team has committed to adapting their key stage 3 curriculum every year to cater for the individual needs of each year group. Five years ago, in conversation with schools in their primary cluster, the school identified that a significant number of pupils would find the transition to secondary school difficult. This led to the design of a new curriculum model which included changing the teaching in two of their classes. These classes provide bespoke teaching and learning opportunities based on the specific needs of individuals. The school makes regular adjustments to this curriculum model which supports all pupils with SEN to make very strong progress towards their targets.

At **Ysgol Bro Pedr**, leaders introduced a life skills department eight years ago to cater for secondary-aged pupils with profound needs and behavioural difficulties, having identified that the existing provision was not meeting the needs of all pupils with SEN. The department opened for two pupils originally but has developed significantly since then and now caters for 24 pupils.

The department is part of a spectrum of flexible curricular arrangements to meet the different needs of pupils with SEN across the school. Leaders plan the timetable carefully to enable the creative use of staff's expertise and strengths, in order to meet pupils' learning needs. For example, pupils have opportunities to pursue a range of qualifications in addition to the opportunities to gain experience of GCSE subjects, such as history or art, without having to sit an examination at the end of the course. Pupils with SEN also benefit from the opportunity to pursue examination courses at different times in their school career.

- 79 In many of the schools visited, processes for self-evaluation and improvement planning reflect the inclusive ethos of the school well. Leaders ensure that there is a suitable variety of formal and informal opportunities for staff to consider and reflect on the provision and outcomes for pupils with SEN. These may include staff, pupil and parental questionnaires, regular meetings that ensure sufficient time is given to the consideration of these pupils, line management meetings, reports to governors, departmental and whole-school self-evaluation reports and action plans. Staff at all levels are reflective and adapt the provision skilfully to ensure this meets the needs of each pupil.
- 80 In the majority of schools, quality assurance processes focus suitably on the provision and progress of pupils with SEN. For example, lesson observations and work scrutiny activities contain an explicit focus on these pupils, and there are effective arrangements to ensure that teachers' planning includes sufficient opportunities for pupils to address their targets. However, in a minority of cases, these arrangements are not sufficiently rigorous. These schools do not monitor the quality of teaching support provided by support staff well enough or use the wide range of evidence collected from activities such as lesson observations, learning walks and work scrutiny to monitor how well teaching supports SEN pupils to achieve their targets. In addition, in a minority of schools, self-evaluation processes focus too narrowly on the interventions they provide and not enough on the impact on pupils' progress over time.

Appendix 1: What do we know about pupils with SEN in Wales?

The term SEN includes a wide range of learning difficulties and disabilities. These usually fall into at least one of the following four broad areas:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- behaviour, emotional and social development
- sensory and/or physical

Schools in Wales use the following categories to report on pupils with SEN for the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC):

- moderate learning difficulties
- general learning difficulties
- severe learning difficulties
- profound and multiple learning difficulties
- dyspraxia
- dyscalculia
- dyslexia
- attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- autistic spectrum disorders
- physical and medical difficulties
- hearing impairment
- visual impairment
- multi-sensory impairment
- speech, language and communications difficulties
- behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

Currently, over 105,000 pupils in maintained schools or being educated other than at school (EOTAS) in Wales are recognised as having SEN (See Table 1a). This represents around 22% of all pupils. Most pupils with SEN in Wales have their needs met within mainstream nursery, primary, secondary or all-age schools. A very few pupils attend specialist classes or resource bases within the mainstream school funded by the local authority. Around the same proportion of pupils attend maintained special schools or receive education other than at school. The proportion of pupils with SEN attending mainstream schools, maintained special schools or EOTAS provision has increased slightly over time but decreased slightly in 2018-2019. There has been a slight but consistent increase in the proportion of pupils attending special schools and EOTAS provision (See Table 1a).

Table 1a: Pupils with SEN by type of provision 2009-2010 to 2018-2019¹

Year	Maintained nursery, primary, secondary and all age schools	Maintained special schools	EOTAS provision	All pupils in maintained schools and EOTAS provision (including those without SEN)	Proportion of pupils in maintained schools and EOTAS provision with SEN
2018-2019	98,996	4,980	1,571	470,182	22.4%
2017-2018	100,797	4,828	1,396	468,721	22.8%
2016-2017	100,852	4,725	1,241	467,910	22.8%
2015-2016	100,603	4,540	1,300	468,067	22.7%
2014-2015	100,513	4,444	1,195	467,091	22.7%
2013-2014	100,965	4,338	1,059	466,306	22.8%
2012-2013	99,472	4,319	1,032	466,088	22.5%
2011-2012	98,784	4,254	922	466,969	22.3%
2010-2011	95,749	4,181	888	467,215	21.6%
2009-2010	94,887	4,117	808	468,136	21.3%

Source: StatsWales (2019e; 2019g) and EOTAS Pupil Census²

¹ Pupils are counted under their 'main' or 'current' type of provision.

Table 1b: Local authority specialist classes in mainstream schools, 2009-2010 to 2018-2019

Year	Number of local authority specialist classes	Number of mainstream schools with local authority specialist classes	Number of pupils in local authority specialist classes ²
2018-2019	491	247	6,233
2017-2018	478	249	4,555
2016-2017	490	254	5,569
2015-2016	507	262	6,474
2014-2015	520	269	6,553
2013-2014	521	278	5,840
2012-2013	531	274	6,668
2011-2012	512	276	6,459
2010-2011	564	280	7,262
2009-2010	525	289	6,766

Source: Pupil Level Annual School Census³

² Pupils may be double-counted if they attend local authority specialist classes at more than one school.

Of those pupils with SEN who receive their education in maintained schools in Wales, 87.3% did not have a statement of SEN in 2018-2019, and 12.7% did. The proportion of pupils with a statement reduced year-on-year from 2009-2010 until 2015-2016 but has started to rise since. Over the same period, the overall percentage of pupils with SEN has risen from 21.2% to 22.2%.

² EOTAS Pupil Census: Unpublished data collected by the Welsh Government, calculations completed by Estyn

³ Unpublished data collected by the Welsh Government, calculations completed by Estyn

Table 2: Proportions of pupils with SEN and proportions of pupils with statements of SEN in maintained schools in Wales, 2009-2010 to 2018-2019

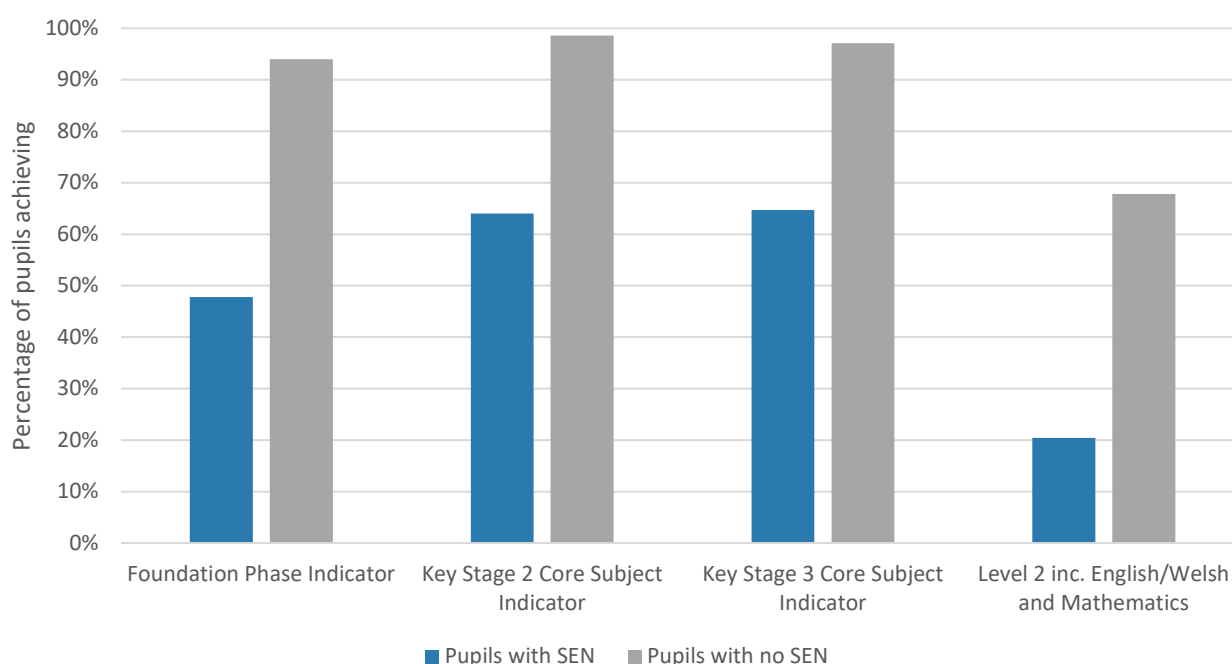
Year	Total Pupils	Total Pupils with SEN	Total pupils with statements of SEN	Percentage of total pupils who have SEN	Percentage of total pupils who have statements of SEN	Percentage of pupils with SEN who have statements
2018-2019	468,398	103,976	13,168	22.2%	2.8%	12.7%
2017-2018	467,112	105,625	12,895	22.6%	2.8%	12.2%
2016-2017	466,508	105,577	12,602	22.6%	2.7%	11.9%
2015-2016	466,555	105,143	12,434	22.5%	2.7%	11.8%
2014-2015	465,704	104,957	12,437	22.5%	2.7%	11.8%
2013-2014	465,081	105,303	12,530	22.6%	2.7%	11.9%
2012-2013	464,868	103,791	12,738	22.3%	2.7%	12.3%
2011-2012	465,943	103,038	13,098	22.1%	2.8%	12.7%
2010-2011	466,172	99,930	13,407	21.4%	2.9%	13.4%
2009-2010	467,141	99,004	13,767	21.2%	2.9%	13.9%

Source: StatsWales (2019f)

Welsh Government data shows that the proportion of pupils with SEN with statements varies considerably between local authorities and does not directly correlate with the overall proportion of pupils with SEN in that authority (StatsWales, 2019f). A higher number of statements in one school or local authority does not therefore necessarily mean a larger number of pupils with significant needs, but rather reflects differing arrangements between local authorities to meet pupils' SEN.

How well do pupils with SEN achieve?

The evaluation of outcomes for pupils with SEN is a highly complex process that needs to take account of a wide range of information. Nationally, the data available to evaluate the achievement of pupils with SEN is based on their attainment against frameworks such as the foundation phase, national curriculum, or examinations such as GCSEs. End of key stage assessments based on these measures show that outcomes for many pupils with SEN are consistently below those of their peers with no SEN (Welsh Government 2018). For example, in 2018, at the end of the foundation phase, only around 48% of pupils with SEN achieved the expected outcome compared with 94% of their peers with no SEN. By the end of key stage 4, only around 20% of pupils with SEN achieved the Level 2 indicator including English and maths compared with 68% of peers with no SEN.

Graph 1: Attainment of pupils with SEN, 2018

Source: StatsWales (2019a; 2019b; 2019c; 2019d)

Considering the challenges that many pupils with SEN face to their learning, this discrepancy is not in itself surprising. For many of these pupils, progress in relation to their individual starting points or the personal goals contained in individual education plans (IEPs) provides more accurate indicators of progress and achievement. While there is no national data available to show progress against these measures, inspection outcomes show that many pupils with SEN make strong progress during their time at school, particularly in primary and special schools. As pupils progress through their education, this picture becomes much less positive, with inspectors reporting strong or good progress for pupils with SEN in only around one-third of secondary schools inspected over the last three years.

Issues around attendance and exclusion from school continue to have a negative impact on the ability of pupils with SEN to learn and make progress. For example, at primary school level, pupils with statements of SEN are more likely to be persistent absentees than any other group of pupils, and share the highest overall rate of absence with pupils eligible for free school meals (Welsh Government, 2019a). At secondary school level, pupils at School Action+ have higher rates of persistent absenteeism than any other group, and the second highest rate of overall absence after pupils eligible for free school meals (Welsh Government 2019a). Similarly, the rate of permanent and fixed term exclusions is substantially higher for pupils with SEN than for pupils without. For example, a child at School Action+ is around 16 times more likely to be permanently excluded from school than a child with no SEN (Welsh Government 2019b).

Appendix 2: A note on terminology

The term 'additional learning needs' first gained widespread currency following the publication of Welsh Government (2006) guidance on Inclusion and Pupil Support. This guidance established the term to cover all children and young people whose learning needs are greater than the majority of their peers. As such, it covered many different groups of learners, including those with SEN. Other groups covered by the guidance include:

- children from families in difficult circumstances
- disabled pupils
- pupils from minority ethnic groups
- asylum seeking and refugee children
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children
- children of migrant workers
- more able and talented (MAT) pupils
- children and young people looked after by the local authority
- pupils with healthcare needs
- pupils who are pregnant or are young parents
- children and young people who offend
- young carers
- lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender pupils
- school refusers and school phobics
- pupils who perform or who have employment

In recent years, the term ALN has become widely used among schools and local authorities, partly to promote the inclusive approaches set out in the guidance, but also to take account of the changes proposed by the ALN Act. While the guidance made clear that the term 'SEN' would continue to be used to identify learners who have severe, complex and/or specific learning difficulties as set out in the Education Act 1996 and the SEN Code of Practice, in practice, the two terms are often used interchangeably. As a result, there is currently great variation in how schools and LAs across Wales use them.

In 2016, the Welsh Government (2016) revised and reissued its guidance on 'Inclusion and Pupil Support', replacing the term ALN with 'pupils who require extra support'. This has helped to clarify the distinction between pupils whose needs will be supported by the new legislative framework, and those who may require greater support than the majority of their peers at some stage in their education.

Appendix 3: Evidence base

The findings and recommendations in this report draw on:

- visits to a range of thirteen primary, two all-age and eight secondary schools, and one special school
- findings from recent school inspections from September 2016-July 2019
- relevant data, as referred to in the report

We selected schools to visit following consideration of their linguistic context, geographical location and socio-economic profile, as well as the evidence provided by recent inspections. In those inspections, all the schools included here demonstrated strong outcomes and provision for pupils with SEN. A minority of the schools we visited host a local authority funded specialist class or resource base.

When visiting schools, inspectors:

- interviewed senior leaders, including SENCOs and those with specific responsibilities for pupils with SEN
- interviewed teachers and support staff
- met with pupils to discuss their experience of school
- scrutinised a range of relevant documentation, including IEPs, one-page profiles, person-centred planning documents and records of professional learning

We would like to thank the following schools that supported this thematic review:

- Bishop Hedley High School, Merthyr Tydfil
- Blaen-Y-Cwm Primary School, Blaenau Gwent
- Brynnau Primary, Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Bryntirion Comprehensive School, Bridgend
- Cogan Primary School, Vale of Glamorgan
- Cwm Glas Primary School, Swansea
- Cwm Ifor Primary School, Caerphilly
- Dwr y Felin Comprehensive School, Neath Port Talbot
- Fitzalan High School, Cardiff
- Gaer Primary School, Newport
- Maendy Primary School, Torfaen
- Rhosymedre Community Primary School, Wrexham
- St Cenydd Community School, Caerphilly
- Tredegar Comprehensive School, Blaenau Gwent
- Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre, Caerphilly
- Tywyn Primary School, Neath Port Talbot
- Ysgol Bro Pedr, Ceredigion
- Ysgol Bae Baglan, Neath Port Talbot
- Ysgol Gwenffrwd, Flintshire
- Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf, Cardiff

- Ysgol Gymuned Rhosybol, Anglesey
- Ysgol Gynradd Bontnewydd, Gwynedd
- Ysgol Gynradd Parcyrhun, Carmarthenshire
- Ysgol Uwchradd Tywyn, Gwynedd

Appendix 4: Stages of the Code of Practice – the Graduated Response

Early Years Action

When an early education practitioner who works day-to-day with the child, or the SENCO, identifies a child with SEN, they should devise interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the setting's usual curriculum offer and strategies.

Early Years Action Plus

Early Years Action Plus is characterised by the involvement of external support services who can help early education schools with advice on new IEPs and targets, provide more specialist assessments, give advice on the use of new or specialist strategies or materials, and in some cases provide support for particular activities.

School Action

When a class teacher or the SENCO identifies a child with SEN the class teacher should provide interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum offer and strategies.

School Action Plus

A request for help from external services is likely to follow a decision taken by the SENCO and colleagues, in consultation with parents, at a meeting to review the child's IEP. Schools should always consult specialists when they take action on behalf of a child through School Action Plus.

School request for a statutory assessment

Where a request for a statutory assessment is made by a school to an local authority, the child will have demonstrated significant cause for concern. The local authority will seek evidence from the school that any strategy or programme implemented for the child in question has been continued for a reasonable period of time without success and that alternatives have been tried, or the reasons why this has not occurred.

Statement of SEN

Once all the advice requested for the statutory assessment has been received, the local authority must decide whether to draw up a statement. The local authority may decide that the degree of the child's learning difficulty and the nature of the provision necessary to meet the child's SEN is such as to require the local authority to determine the child's special educational provision through a statement.

Note in lieu

Within two weeks of completing the statutory assessment the LEA must decide whether or not they will make a statement. The local authority may consider issuing a note in lieu of a statement. It may be appropriate for the format of a note in lieu to follow broadly the statutory format of the statement, although there is a difference in the legal status of the two documents.

Appendix 5: Overview of changes to SEN legislation

The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 (National Assembly for Wales, 2018) replaces the current legislation around SEN and the assessment of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) in post-16 education and training.

Objectives of the Act

- 1 •To provide a unified piece of legislation to support children and young people aged 0-25 with additional learning needs in providers and further education institutions;
- 2 •To promote an integrated, collaborative process of assessment, planning and monitoring which facilitates early, timely and effective interventions; and
- 3 •To have a fair and transparent system for providing information and advice and for resolving concerns and appeals.

The objectives are supported by the following 11 aims:

1 The introduction of the term ‘additional learning needs (ALN)’

The Act replaces the terms ‘special educational needs (SEN)’ and ‘learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD)’ with the new term ‘additional learning needs (ALN)’.

2 A 0 to 25 age range

There will be a single legislative system relating to the support given to children and young people aged between 0 to 25 years who have ALN. This is instead of the two separate systems currently operating to support children and young people of compulsory school age who have SEN, and young people in further education who have LDD.

3 A unified plan

The Act creates a single statutory plan (the individual development plan (IDP)) to replace the existing variety of statutory and non-statutory SEN or LDD plans for pupils in schools and further education.

4 Increased participation of children and young people

The Act requires that pupils’ views should always be considered as part of the planning process, along with those of their parents/carers. It is imperative that children and young people see the planning process as something which is done with them rather than to them.

5 High aspirations and improved outcomes

The emphasis of IDPs will be on making provision that delivers tangible outcomes that contribute in a meaningful way to the child or young person's achievement of their full potential.

6 A simpler and less adversarial system

The process of producing and revising an IDP should be much simpler than is currently the case with statements of SEN.

7 Increased collaboration

The new system encourages improved collaboration and information sharing between agencies, which are essential to ensuring that needs are identified early and the right support is put in place to enable children and young people to achieve positive outcomes.

8 Avoiding disagreements and earlier disagreement resolution

The new system focuses on ensuring that where disagreements occur about an IDP or the provision it contains, the matter is considered and resolved at the most local level possible.

9 Clear and consistent rights of appeal

Where disagreements about the contents of an IDP cannot be resolved at the local level, the Act ensures that children and young people entitled to an IDP (and their parents/carers in the case of those that are under 16 years) have a right of appeal to a tribunal.

10 The ALN Code

The ALN Code will provide a set of clear, legally enforceable parameters within which local authorities and those other organisations responsible for the delivery of services for children and young people with ALN, must act.

11 A bilingual system

The Act requires that services must consider whether a child or young person needs additional learning provision in Welsh. If they do, this must be documented in the IDP and 'all reasonable steps' must be taken to secure the provision in Welsh.

Appendix 6: List of case studies and cameos⁴

Chapter 1: Effective support for pupils with SEN

Page number	School	Subject of case study
8	Bryntirion Comprehensive School	Robust assessments enable staff to identify suitable interventions
10	Brynnau Primary School	Rigorous initial assessment processes support staff very effectively to track and monitor the progress of pupils with SEN
15	Bishop Hedley Catholic High School	Consistent and effective practices to monitor and review the progress of pupils with SEN

Cameos

11	Ysgol Bae Baglan
13	Ysgol Gynradd Parcyrhun
14	Ysgol Gynradd Bontnewydd

Chapter 2: Engaging with others to support pupils with SEN

17	Gaer Primary School	The school works exceptionally well with parents, carers, families to support pupils with SEN when they join the school
20	Ysgol Gymuned Rhosybol	Detailed knowledge of pupils' family circumstances helps to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to address issues that are important to support their wellbeing and engagement in learning
22	Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf	Well-co-ordinated arrangements across all its partner primary schools to facilitate the transition of pupils with SEN
25	Cogan Primary School	The school ensures that all pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life

⁴ The term cameo refers to the highlighted passages of effective practice identified throughout the report

29	Cwm Ifor Primary School, St Cenydd Community School, Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre	An innovative partnership with the local special school to share good practice and develop professional learning to support pupils with SEN
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Cameos

19	Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenffrwd
22	Fitzalan High School
24	Brynnau Primary School
24	Gaer Primary School
28	Ysgol Rhosybol
29	Rhosymedre Community Primary School
29	Maendy Primary School
32	Ysgol Uwchradd Tywyn
33	Blaen y Cwm Primary School
34	Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf

Chapter 3: Effective leadership for SEN

39	Ysgol Bae Baglan	Following the creation of the new school, leaders and managers at Ysgol Bae Baglan have worked successfully to implement robust structures to promote the achievement of pupils with SEN
42	Rhosymedre Community Primary School	A well-planned programme of professional learning across the school develops all staff as confident, informed practitioners
45	Blaen y Cwm County Primary School	Effective self-evaluation has helped to improve the school's provision mapping and secure stronger outcomes for pupils with SEN

Cameos

35	Maendy Primary School
35	Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenffrwd
36	Tywyn Primary School
37	Ysgol Gynradd Bontnewydd
38	Ysgol Uwchradd Tywyn
38	Fitzalan High School
41	Dwr y Felin Comprehensive School
44	Tredegar Comprehensive School
46	Dwr y Felin Comprehensive School
47	Ysgol Bro Pedr

Glossary

Communities First	Communities First was a Welsh Government programme that focussed on reducing persistent poverty in the most deprived areas of Wales. It ran from 2001 to 2018.
Flying Start	Flying Start is a Welsh Government scheme aimed at improving the life chances of children under four years of age and their families in disadvantaged communities across Wales. It offers eligible parents free childcare for two to three-year-olds, parenting support, an enhanced health visitor service and support for speech, language and communication.
IEP	Individual education plan. A document that supports teachers to plan for the progress of pupils with SEN. They generally set out personal targets, the support provided to help the pupil meet the targets, and how the school will review pupils' progress against targets.
Level 1 threshold	A volume of qualifications at Level 1 equivalent to the volume of five GCSEs at grade A*-G
One-page profile	A tool to support person-centred planning. It contains important information about the pupil and how they like to be supported.
Person-centred practice	Approaches to working with pupils that promote the active participation of pupils in planning, setting goals and reviewing progress
SENCo	Special education needs co-ordinator – a teacher who co-ordinates the provision for pupils with SEN in schools
Specialist resource base	A specialist class within a mainstream school funded by the local authority to provide targeted support for a specific learning difficulty or disability, or range of learning difficulties or disabilities
Statement of SEN	Statements of SEN are issued to pupils with the most complex needs. The statement makes it a legal requirement that the pupil should receive the provision identified.
Support staff	Teaching assistants or learning support assistants
Third sector organisations	Organisations that belong neither to the public sector nor the private sector, for example, charities, voluntary and community organisations, social enterprises and co-operatives

Numbers – quantities and proportions

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%

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